# New Republic

APRIL 18, 1949


# SPRING BOOK NUMBER

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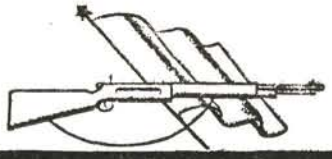

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**New Republic**

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# WASHINGTON WIRE

WE ARE WRITING this in Chicago at the Americans for Democratic Action convention. We have mounted our old portable at the hotel window looking down on the juncture of Randolph and State Streets. From below comes up the twitter of a Chicago traffic cop. The rumble from around the corner springs from a rusty, ambling two-car El train, as surprising in a big city as a covered wagon, as quaint as Colonel Robert McCormick himself. Here in Chicago, too, they still use main thoroughfares for battered street cars. Under the web of trolley wires down below you can see traces of an abandoned line, the patched pavement, covered over with successive quiltings of untidy cement, macadam and brick, showing where various Chicago political contractors made their killings.

After Washington, everything here seems drab and dirty. The big Hotel Bismarck rises like a factory. No green thing is in sight. The RKO Palace electric lights have flickered all night proclaiming "The SET UP with Robert Ryan also Blondie's Secret." Can't bother to switch them off. From this height you can see out across the toothless gaps between tall, grim buildings to smaller buildings behind that stretch away and away, past city smokestacks, past roofs with water tanks uppointed on stilts like waiting rockets, past stockyards out to the edge of the flat, rich prairie where the buffalo used to be.

Chicago. Chicago of Colonel Bertie McCormick, who has one of the best minds of the thirteenth century. Chicago, whose civic shiftlessness is symbolized by that patched pavement below. But also another town. The gilt sign across the way reads, "Department of Revenue, Adlai E. Stevenson, Governor." There is a reform Governor in Illinois. There is also, suddenly, a reform Senator in Washington—Paul H. Douglas, an internationalist, a professor, replacing Curly Brooks, another covered wagon. There is a reform mayor in this very city, Martin Kennelly; we rub our eyes in doubt. The "Adlai Stevenson" sign is still there. Yep, it's real. Though, honestly, we still can't believe it.

**The ADA convention** is the first big liberal trade-union meeting since the election and, more important, the first since the 81st Congress showed itself blood brother to the 80th. Five quick months after the November victory voters have learned just how little a presidential victory means in a governmental system where party discipline doesn't exist. We can think of no similar reversal—none so quick and dramatic—in American history.

Observers have watched the ADA here with clinical fascination. Is the liberal tide rising or falling? Is the ADA itself real or a phony? Well, it is organized as an independent, anti-Communist, progressive pressure group, outside both old parties. It has chapters now in most big cities, on 148 campuses, and boasts some 35,000 dues-paying members. Regular politicians regard it with dislike and apprehension. Its screwball amateurs got the civil-rights plank into Truman's platform, precipitated the Dixiecrat walkout, worked wonders for some candidates in the lunatic 1948 election.

Is it just a flash in the pan? Its big immediate assets are the ADA endorsement (like a trade-union label for candidates) and the fact that it constitutes a common meeting place for the political-action committees of the AFL and CIO. It is obviously still ridiculously small. But, God knows, strange things are happening. Truman and Acheson took this ADA convention seriously enough to send telegrams. The list of speakers is impres-

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# Max Lerner
## in the *New Republic*

Beginning with this issue, Max Lerner will contribute regularly and frequently to the *New Republic.*

Long-time readers are already familiar with the high quality of the writing of this brilliant scholar, philosopher and student of affairs.

New readers will sense immediately the deep penetration, solid sanity, wide and thorough learning which he applies to every subject that comes under the far-ranging scope of his pen, whether he writes on problems of war and peace, the changing characteristics of our native culture or—as he is equally likely to do—baseball and the movies.

His article in the current issue is a good sample of the clarity and grace of his writing.

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sive. Then, too, look at Illinois, with Stevenson, Douglas, Kennelly. Maybe a new epoch really is starting. Maybe starry eyes are coming into fashion. This frequently baffled column can't say. But right now we know of no better investment than the ADA for anybody with good intentions and $3.

**How would you feel** if somebody had fired through a window of your home, trying to assassinate you? Bitter and jittery? That's what happened to Walter Reuther, red-headed leader of the CIO Auto Workers. We asked him his reactions here at the convention. He discussed the outrage objectively and matter-of-factly, as though it had happened to somebody else. There seemed no bitterness at all. His right arm will always be stiff, but he wiggled the white fingers with his left hand to show they are still flexible. Doctors say the nerve may never grow back. He has to use a sling, but he was cheerful about it. The motive for the attack is still a mystery, and Reuther is still our symbol of the new-style, socially conscious American labor leader.

**Whom will** the Democrats nominate to succeed Truman in 1952? Three Governors are possibilities and they were all present at the ADA convention—Adlai Stevenson of Illinois, Chester Bowles of Connecticut and G. Mennen ("Soapy") Williams of Michigan. The phenomenon of a President confronted by a Congress controlled by the rival party is frequent in America; what few people realize is how often it also happens in individual states.

These three potential candidates all have that trouble: Stevenson has a Republican Senate; Bowles a Republican House; young Williams has everything against him, including the Governor's Council. All three are trying to get archaic state constitutions modernized. Truman's trouble with his legislature in Congress is the same kind of thing that faces the three liberal Governors. Funny way to run government, but it's the American way.

*Chicago* T. R. B.

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VOLUME, 120, NUMBER 16, ISSUE 1794, NEW YORK CITY, APRIL 18, 1949 **New Republic**

# AGREEMENT ON WESTERN GERMANY

BRITAIN, AMERICA AND FRANCE are agreed at last on the role of Western Germany. Backed by an election victory and the North Atlantic Pact, the French government for the first time has felt itself strong enough to surrender. The American position is accepted on reparations, the dismantling program and the restricted industries. The insistence of the de Gaullist French Military Governor, General Koenig, on the breakup of Germany is overcome. The agreement foreshadows the acceptance of a new constitution at Bonn, the ending of military government, and the creation within months of a Western German state.

This state will be supported by the great majority of Germans in the three Western zones—but not because they believe in democracy or are resigned to the division of Germany. The new state is a setback to the extreme nationalist group, which, encouraged by Russia, has raised the banner of a unified Germany freed from Allied oppression. And yet unregenerate nationalism still predominates in Western Germany. The Western Germans accept the new state, first, because limited autonomy is a step toward full autonomy; second, because unification of the three zones seems better than no unification at all.

For generations, in the new state, political democracy will be a foreign system imposed by enemy countries, rather than a way of life ingrained in every German. The only phase of Western life the Germans can grasp is economic democracy: the sharing of industrial power by the trade unions, and a fair distribution of the national wealth. Our protection against German aggression in the future is to encourage economic democracy in Germany now.

So far, our Military Government has discouraged economic democracy in Germany. It has failed to carry out full decartelization and denazification in German heavy industry.

The economic problems of Western Germany are great. The area has gained 20 percent in population. It has lost, perhaps forever, the grain and potato supplies of Eastern Germany, Poland and Russia, on which it lived. In addition, terrific production goals have been set for Western Germany by ECA, in order that it may be self-sustaining by 1952. These goals would mean the continuation of present hardships, even by the most equalitarian policies. But military government is implementing them by orthodox conservative methods: by the concentration of economic wealth and power.

Our way of restricting consumption, so that resources can be devoted to the expansion of industrial capacity, is to abolish controls, to let prices rise, to hold down wages, and to impose no income or corporate taxes, in order that business can turn record profits back into new investment. This policy is creating a new class of profiteers. It is enriching the great corporations. It is providing a happy hunting ground for get-rich-quick American investors. For a while there is prosperity in the Western zones. There is also great economic unrest. Just as the last inflation destroyed the middle class, a new inflation, induced by American policy, can wipe out the subsistence of the workers: turning Communist or Fascist, they could be lost for democracy.

Already the tension between the Socialist Ruhr, with much of the population, and nationalist Bavaria, with most of the food, is great and growing. Bavaria is sprouting new Fascist fronts each day.

**At present** within Western Germany political power is evenly balanced. In the cities such as Hamburg and Bremen, and the industrial states such as North Rhine-Westphalia and Hesse, the Socialists predominate. They have voiced nationalist ambitions; but their reason for supporting a centralized German state is to give government the power to ration goods, to control industry and to redistribute wealth.

In Bavaria, Baden and Württemberg, the Christian Democrats predominate. Their left wing, among the workers who used to belong to the old Christian trade unions, coöperates with the Socialists. Their right wing in Bavaria stands for irredentism and all the policies which paralyzed the Weimar Republic and brought Hitler to power.

These two parties will form a coalition government after the elections. They will govern Western Germany under the occupation statute and the Constitution. In their struggle to determine the direction of the new state, the Allied economic policies will be decisive.

The creation of the Western German state will

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deepen divisions and heighten fears throughout Western Europe. For that reason, the creation of a European federation is more urgent than ever. The new state also will arouse new fears in Russia. It destroys the major objective of Soviet diplomacy in the past year. It makes impossible the early conclusion of a peace settlement. It forbids the unification and four-power control of Germany except as these ends are favored by observance of the strict guarantees of freedom provided by the Bonn Constitution. It ratifies the division of East and West. So it makes the effort to reach agreement on all possible subjects more urgent than ever.

We cannot suddenly evacuate Berlin and leave two million Germans to what the Socialist Party describes as "a regime of terror with an omnipotent secret police along with concentration and forced labor camps." Nonetheless, a settlement of the Berlin dispute moves to the head of the agenda for world peace.

# THE WEEK

## The Perennial Filibuster

A REPUBLICAN CABAL has immobilized the United States Senate for the past 15 days in a filibuster as time-consuming as that against the change in the Senate rules which occupied the first two weeks of March. A handful of isolationist Republicans, led by Senators George Malone of Nevada and William Jenner of Indiana, have held the floor for approximately the same number of hours the Southern Democrat-Republican coalition consumed earlier. But the headlines and the editorials condemning this filibuster have been lacking. To judge from the press, the past two weeks have been spent in pertinent, statesmanlike discussion of world issues, not in a carefully contrived plot to wreck the Fair Deal program by delay.

Day after day, since the question of extending the authority of the Economic Coöperation Administration for another year came up for consideration on March 23, Republican Senators have held the floor in a series of obviously rehearsed performances. (Space in the *Congressional Record* during the first 15 days showed that the Republicans had talked away 74 percent of the time; the Democrats, 26 percent.) Senators Kem (Mo.), Ecton (Mont.), Donnell (Mo.), McCarthy (Wis.), Brewster (Me.), and Wherry (Neb.)—each has been ready in his turn with interruptions and questions to relieve Jenner and Malone in their attacks on ECA. They frequently held the floor for as lengthy periods as those of the Southern filibusterers. Malone talked for six solid hours, dwelling heavily on the RFC, the history of the Bretton Woods Agreement, and other extraneous matters. Our business relations with Morocco, the International Trade Organization, and other subjects irrelevant to ECA fill column after column of the *Congressional Record* during these days. At least one Republican Senator privately charges that the eight men named above are operating as an organized wrecking crew, meeting behind the scenes and playing their parts in the floor show on cue.

**Opposition to ECA** is nothing new to most of the men involved. Under Senator Wherry's leadership last year they were members of the "last-gasp" group which fought its establishment. But their present tactic is only secondarily aimed at the Marshall Plan. The attempt to delay extension of rent control beyond the deadline date was their warm-up. Their obstruction of ECA resulted in at least a few days during which our pipeline to Europe was empty. They are looking forward to increasing success with their delaying schemes as the session wears on and tempers become frayed.

Senator Taft, the spiritual leader of this group, has been careful to dissociate himself from them publicly. He has absented himself from the floor during almost the entire ECA debate and has tried to create the impression that he has no connection with these ruffians. But he has voted with them, and when matters even closer to his heart—such as the fight against repeal of Taft-Hartley—come to the floor, he may openly identify himself with the cabal.

The Democratic leadership, unfortunately, is almost as much to blame as the press for failing to acquaint the public with what has really been going on in the Senate. Aside from futile protests from the ever more futile Majority Leader Scott Lucas, only the aging Senator Connally (Tex.) and Millard Tydings (Md.) have offered real objections to the proceedings. The young Democratic Senators elected last November from whom so much was hoped have, regrettably, been conspicuous by their absence from the floor. For the most part, Democratic Senators have let the filibuster go unchallenged. Senator Lucas did rise one day to summarize the problem:

> Let me state the situation briefly. Everyone knew that ECA had a deadline on April 3 and when the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations brought in the bill and we took it up, I propounded the inquiry to the Senator from Texas and the Senator from Michigan as to how long they thought it would take to pass the ECA bill on the floor of the Senate. They were of the opinion we could dispose of the bill in three days, and so was I. . . . With 15 or 20 measures on the calendar, and others to come, which involve the safety and security of the nation, I do not believe we can con-

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tinue to go along with horse and buggy speed in the Senate and expect to meet the problems which are and will be before us, both national and international.

The Republican cabal does not believe that we can either. If the Democrats decide to keep the Senate in session while the House takes a two-weeks vacation as an "Easter Recess," the GOP filibusterers will just take a deep breath and continue their program of talking the Fair Deal to death.

As the third month of the 81st Congress begins, there are rumors that Senate Majority Leader Lucas has already had enough, that he will soon plead ill health and resign the leadership, probably in favor of the more vigorous and tough-skinned Majority Whip, Francis Myers (Pa.). Such a move could only be for the best.

## INDESTRUCTIBLE BRIDGES

*SAN FRANCISCO (NR correspondent)*

Harry Bridges and the union leadership he stands for have survived another test under fire in the convention of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union here. Three representatives of the National CIO sat in on the meetings to lend their prestige to the anti-Bridges forces in the ILWU, led by James Kearney, president of Bridges' home Local No. 10, and CIO President Philip Murray directed a sizzling telegram to the union's officers in the midst of the convention objecting to "unwarranted rumors and unfounded reports spread against the CIO and its policies." But Bridges survived.

The main issue of the convention was whether the ILWU should continue to follow Bridges' leadership and flout national CIO policy on issues like the Marshall Plan and affiliation to the World Federation of Trade Unions, or kick him out and follow the program laid down by Murray and the national organization.

The convention met in a masks-off, no-holds-barred mood behind closed doors. First reports from the executive session had R. J. Thomas, former UAW president, who personally represented Murray, yelling at Bridges, "If you don't like the policy of the National CIO, why don't you get out?"

In his keynote speech, Bridges made it clear that he and his fellow officers were not compromising and were not getting out. A vote for them meant a vote for the union's autonomy. The test came on a policy resolution declaring "that the ILWU stands fast on its autonomy . . . and sees to it that such rights are protected . . . despite National CIO efforts to attack and penalize our union. . . ." Bridges spoke of other CIO unions that had chosen to follow national policy and said, "If they are right, you delegates had better reorganize this union and get a different set of officers because the ones that I am speaking for now are going to carry on as they have in the last couple of years." A few weeks ago, his "home union," Local 10, had voted to follow national policy instead of Bridges. But this time, the 200 delegates from the 100,000 longshore, warehouse, sugar and pineapple workers, from the West Coast, Hawaii, Canada and Alaska, voted 632½ to 11½ in support of Bridges.

The ILWU convention came at a time when many longshoremen were short of work, if not unemployed, due to the slackness in shipping and to the inflated membership from wartime boom days. Lately there has not been sufficient work to provide 40 hours apiece to ILWU men each week, let alone overtime. Bridges has been moving mountains to make more jobs, cooperating with shipowners to increase the flow of business in every way possible. Many delegates who disagreed with Bridges' political stand still supported him on trade-union grounds.

The 632½-to-11½ roll-call vote is not an adequate measure of the opposition to Bridges which exists in the ILWU. But it is overwhelming proof of the union's unwillingness to forgo the strong trade-union leadership he has provided for a counter political philosophy, offered by the CIO's national leaders. Philip Murray's recommendation that the ILWU fall in line with national policy has been overwhelmingly rejected—for the moment at least. The psychological warfare between the National CIO and Harry Bridges will continue. However, President Murray has few other means at hand for forcing the ILWU to conform. The national organization can do little now except ride along and hope that Harry Bridges will swing into line or that opposition to him within his union will soon grow strong enough to force him out.

## MEDICINE FOR THE MASSES

President Truman, in his message to the 81st Congress, said America needs "a system of prepaid medical insurance which will enable every American to afford good medical care . . . without further delay." Soon thereafter Senator James E. Murray (D, Mont.) and five other Democrats introduced a comprehensive health plan aimed at giving adequate medical care to 85 percent of the population.

However, on this, as on many another issue before the 81st Congress, the Administration, congressional Democrats and Republicans have now split three ways. Last week Senator Lister Hill (D, Ala.) and Wayne Morse (R, Ore.), both of whom come up for reëlection next year, joined with three of their colleagues in introducing a new "voluntary" health-insurance bill based on government subsidy of prepaid health insurance for those who can't afford to buy it themselves. Actually, this bipartisan bill offers little more than the official "doctor's monopoly" program of the American Medical Association.

Under the Hill bill, those "unable to pay the costs" of medical care would be issued "service cards" entitling them to the same quality of hospital and medical services provided subscribers by the present group-health-insurance plans. But the bill does not define those who would be eligible nor does it estimate the cost of the program. If Senator Hill and his cohorts intend to hand out free service cards to the large middle-income group, the proposal will call for billions of dollars out of the Treasury without any assurance that it will provide adequate medical care. If he includes only those

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families making less than $1,200 a year, he will be touching the group already dependent on charity.

The Administration's health measure is designed to cover all families whose income is between $1,200 and $5,000 (about 90 million people) and would be paid for by a payroll tax on both workers and employers similar to the present social-security tax.

A third health bill, which will have the support of the Republicans and possibly the AMA, will soon be introduced by Senators Robert Taft (R, O.) and H. Alexander Smith (R, N.J.). Charity-minded Senator Taft favors aid only for the bottom 20 percent of the population.

Both the Hill and the Taft proposals are based on the principle of public medical charity and would require the establishment of a means test, necessitating a bureaucracy of social workers to investigate constantly the proper category in which to place each American family. The Administration program includes insurance against the costs of medical care for practically everyone, federal aid to the states for public health, for research and for medical education, for maternal and child-health programs, and for hospital construction. It is based on the idea that people should pay their way in proportion to their means by small regular payments into the insurance fund. As President Truman has pointed out, "It is—in the long run—far less costly and more effective than public charity or a medical dole."

## IF NOT ADA, THEN WHO?

Two years ago, when the ADA was founded, it amounted to a committee of ex-New Dealers. This year, the 700 delegates who trooped into Chicago's Hotel Sherman for the ADA's second convention were another generation. Most of them were in their early thirties, young men and women who had risen to commanding positions in politics by individual effort or the use of the ADA organization.

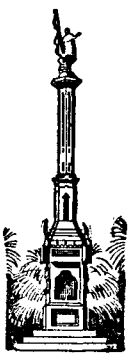
There were state Democratic chairmen and committeemen, mayors of large cities, and state legislators. There were a great many students, already moving into political careers. Ironically, among the trade unions, the AFL was far better represented than the CIO; it sent teamsters, millinery workers, Pullman porters, upholsterers, municipal workers, teachers. Many new unions had sizable delegations, thanks partly to the active leadership of the ILGWU. The CIO was represented largely by auto and textile workers. The steel workers, some of whose organizers attended last year's convention, were absent. So was the CIO-PAC. The Amalgamated Clothing Workers, whose leader, Sidney Hillman, brought this generation of trade unionists into political action, has never joined the ADA.

The delegates "tore their souls," in Reinhold Niebuhr's words, before supporting the North Atlantic Pact. They argued hotly about the inclusion of Portugal in the pact. But their real interest was in organization. They talked precinct politics night and day. They insisted on stressing chapter organization. They refused to commit themselves wholly to the Democratic Party, although they called for close coöperation with liberal Democrats. Incensed by the stalling tactics of Congress, they voted to hold a series of state and local legislative conferences to bring pressure behind the Fair Deal. They voted also to begin work at once on a selected list of congressional campaigns for 1950, and to make a major drive for chapters in the South.

Two years ago the ADA was a New York caucus. At this convention Illinois, Minnesota and Michigan held the real leadership in an organization that was stirred by what collective liberal effort in these states had accomplished. The delegates were militant and optimistic. They listened to Governor Bowles (Conn.) predict victory in 1950. They applauded when Governor Williams (Mich.) explained that Republican successes in the recent elections were an off-year break. They didn't claim control of Washington. But they agreed with their new chairman, Senator Hubert Humphrey (Minn.), who asked, "If ADA doesn't do the job, then who will?"

# OUTSIDE AMERICA

**Spain** hasn't for quite a long time been particularly popular with the plain people of the United States. True, some of the not so plain Americans have tried to get the country to do business with Generalissimo Francisco Franco; since last summer Jim Farley, Senator Chan Gurney and a flock of various and sundry generals and businessmen have been doing their darnedest to whitewash the black deeds of the little Gallegan Caudillo. The big argument was of course the need for Spain if the West-East cold war should get hot. Yet the sales campaign failed. Franco didn't get any ECA money. American diplomatic and political pressure was directed (officially at least) toward getting Franco out of office. And not even the affectionate interest of the big brass in Washington in the height of the Pyrenees was enough to get Franco Spain a ticket of admission into the North Atlantic Pact.



Portugal, the other of the tandem of Iberian Fascist dictatorships, is another matter. Though Professor Antonio de Oliveira Salazar's *Estado Novo* is as Fascist as Franco's Spain, his brutalities haven't been wholesale and overt; his country hasn't been given any large-scale blood bath; he was careful during the war to play both sides of the street. Besides, there isn't any backlog of Portuguese unpopularity in the United States, while in Britain a six-centuries-old treaty makes the lesser member of the Iberian family His Britannic Majesty's oldest ally. Most important of all, Portugal has islands enormously useful both for air and sea power, and in

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terms of the North Atlantic Pact bases far out over the water count for more than high mountains inland. So Portugal is welcomed into the Pact.

As a matter of fact, the United States and Great Britain have done more than merely give the Portuguese dictator better treatment than they did the Spanish *jefe*: they have contributed to saving Salazar's political life, which since last year has been in danger. (See "Outside America"—March 7, 1949, and February 21, 1949.) For example, there was the case of the colonels—as it's known in Lisbon.

**Last winter,** at the start of the election campaign in Portugal—the first in more than 20 years—Portuguese democrats felt they had friends at court. In this context, court was a house in Lisbon's Rua da Lapa, high on a hill overlooking the Tagus. Here American Ambassador Lincoln MacVeagh, no ardent democrat, was the boss; but here too were the offices of two men who had openly expressed sympathy with the opposition to the dictator. They were Colonel Francis Borgia Kane, military attaché, and Colonel Eugene Tibbets, air attaché. Their presence seemed to give the lie to Salazar's contention that the State Department wanted his puppet president, Marshal Carmona, to stay in power, and considered the other candidate, General Norton de Mattos—a kind of local Henry Wallace—a tool of the Communists.

But during the campaign these two officers were replaced by Colonel Frank Freeman Miter and Colonel Bourne Adkison. Maybe politics had nothing to do with the switch, maybe it was a routine changing of the guard. But the timing gave Salazar an advantage he badly needed. Then, ten days before the voting in February, MacVeagh gave an elaborate luncheon party in honor of Santos Costa. Again it might have been a routine matter of protocol. Still, the campaign's strong-arm tactics were largely Santos Costa's work, and the party made it seem as if the United States was underwriting this work—Santos Costa is war minister of the *Estado Novo*.

During the last week of the campaign Santos Costa not only hinted that the army "might take a hand" if Norton de Mattos was elected, but intimidated the voters by holding war games. Under the circumstances, there was nothing for Norton de Mattos to do but withdraw from the race. Before he did; Salazar made a cryptic statement: he said the election would probably be the "last constitutional opportunity" for the opposition to elect a president. By mid-March the meaning of the statement began to emerge. Salazar's cabinet held secret meetings two days in a row. Then there were meetings of all the district governors. Bit by bit the Portuguese were allowed to guess what was going on; rumors were planted in the best Fascist fashion.

**The story** deliberately leaked out to the public was that Salazar, with the blessing of the Americans and even more of the British, was arranging for the restoration of the Portuguese monarchy. The king would be the young son of Don Duarte Nuno. Salazar would head a regency council. Other members would be Dr. Pinto Coelho; Dr. Fezas Vital, deputy of Don Duarte; General Pereira Coutinho, military governor of Lisbon; and of course Santos Costa, who as lord high constable of the regime would be in charge of the education at a military school of the last scion of the Braganzas.

A new political debate started, Salazar's men arguing that with the creation of the regency council all the dictator's Fascist bygones would be forgiven and forgotten in London and Washington. The opposition said it refused to believe that the democratic West would fall for such a false front of respectability. Then, a few days later, perhaps by the sheerest coincidence, the British Home Fleet arrived in Lisbon on a good-will tour; and while the officers were being feted, word came from Washington that Salazar would be welcomed into the North Atlantic Pact.

Nevertheless, despite all this support from the West, Salazar's position isn't secure, and he knows it. Above all, he knows that Portugal's presence in the pact while Spain is absent creates new dangers for him. So, believe it or not, Salazar has in recent weeks been going through the motions of playing hard to get; there have been broad hints in Lisbon that conditions have been attached to Portugal's formal adhesion to the Washington treaty. Spanish and Portuguese politicos have been meeting. From Madrid, American Chargé d'Affaires Culbertson has gone to Washington with a big and wonderful package of promises picked up at a meeting with Franco; the story in Madrid is that this time the Caudillo has not only offered air, military and naval bases in exchange for ECA help and an invitation to join the pact but has said he was willing to transform his country into an armed camp at the disposal of the United States.

**The promises** aren't all mere bargaining bids; this time Franco is willing to pay because his economic situation (partly the result of the economic crisis in Argentina) is getting desperate. And this time, Spanish democrats are sure, American liberals could (if they really had influence on foreign policy) get their government to drive the hardest kind of bargain with Franco. But neither the Spanish nor the Portuguese democrats are hopeful. They believe Franco's promises plus Salazar's conditions will get Fascist Spain into the pact without any liberal conditions. It may take a little while, perhaps another West-East cold-war crisis, to soften up America's liberal obstinacy. But sooner or later, the Spaniard who let Hitler's submarines use bases against American shipping will be accepted—as the head of a government "determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage, and civilization of their peoples founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law." PERCY WINNER

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# WEEKEND AT THE WALDORF

*The Conference of Scientific and Cultural Workers for World Peace meets and talks, but cannot resolve the intellectual's quandary*

**by Joseph P. Lash**

No SINGLE REPORTER could do justice to the hectic weekend at the Waldorf, a weekend in which the conflict between the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace and Americans for Intellectual Freedom dramatically highlighted the passionate, contradictory, confusing loyalties tearing intellectuals asunder in this revolutionary epoch.

Nor did the press as a whole, unable to decide whether it was organizing a witch hunt, covering a political convention or photographing an academic circus, lessen public bafflement. It was a weekend in which usually cynical reporters served as volunteers at the headquarters of Americans for Intellectual Freedom and in which the publisher of a daily paper found himself on one side, while forty of his staff sent a contribution to the other.

It was a weekend of bitter, factional passion. Honest, independent non-Communists like Harlow Shapley, Bishop Moulton, T. O. Thackrey, O. John Rogge, Frederick L. Schuman heard themselves denounced as Communist stooges, while equally honest men—Norman Cousins, H. J. Muller, Sidney Hook, George Counts, Bryn Hovde—were branded as the running dogs of imperialism.

The issues raised by the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace were momentous. On the level of most intimate concern to the intellectual worker was the question of the relative claims of creative freedom and social responsibility on the writer, artist and scientist. Here the counter-group, Americans for Intellectual Freedom, performed a useful function in its sharp challenge of the Soviet view that only those works which serve the class struggle as defined by the current party line could be regarded as true and beautiful, a challenge which found unexpected and refreshing support within the halls of the Conference of Cultural and Scientific Workers itself.

On the political level the Waldorf conference again underscored the immense quandaries created for free men by Communism's challenge, simultaneously, to human freedom and human exploitation. Peace and not freedom, Anna Louise Strong declared in the course of the conference, was the major world issue. For millions of people, said Rogge, learning how to read was a more immediate and burning issue than freedom of the press. "I am not afraid to work with Communists when they are right," defiantly shouted the ruddy-cheeked, wispy Englishman, Olaf Stapledon, while outside pickets carried placards shrouded in crepe bearing the names Masaryk, Petkov, Mindszenty.

At every point there were dilemmas and contradictions—within the ranks of the Waldorf conference they were personified by Anna Louise Strong, lifelong advocate of the Soviet cause and currently denounced by the USSR and the *Daily Worker* as a "spy"; and by the Yugoslav delegation, ardently Communist but gently suggesting that "peaceful coöperation is possible if the rights of all people to live as they desire is respected." And within the ranks of the Freedom House camp there was Bryn Hovde, president of the New School for Social Research, denouncing the USSR's suppression of intellectual freedom, while in front of the Waldorf similar sentiments were being shouted by frenzied pickets at least some of whom had a few weeks earlier joined in the reactionary hue and cry against Hovde's being chosen as president of Queens College.

It was a weekend dominated by the diffident, boyish figure of the great Soviet composer, Dmitri Shostakovich. Although he hewed loyally to the party line, and at every point insisted on the political responsibility of the artist, he, nevertheless, seemed happiest when he could steal away from politics to a concert. From the beginning the word went out among the reporters, "Let Shosty alone," and even the pickets carried a sign, "Shostakovich, we understand." The composer seemed to embody the dilemma of the artist in a period of intense national, class and party feelings. Introducing him at one of the panels, the American composer, Aaron Copland, said that it was one of the wonders of the art of music that it transcended the language of ideological differences. And it was this observer's feeling that the immense tribute given to Shostakovich was men's acclaim for the things which beneath the clash of party and power groupings give mankind dignity and joy and are common to all humanity.

**The Conference** of Scientific and Cultural Workers for World Peace was initiated by the National Council of the Arts, Sciences and Professions of which the chairman is Harlow Shapley, Harvard astronomer. It was called with the objective of promoting world peace by a mobilization of cultural and scientific workers and by the encouragement of cultural interchange among nations. The National Council of the ASP was itself an outgrowth of the onetime Independent Citizens' Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions from which Harold Ickes resigned as chairman because of its political coloration. Many distinguished American intellectuals and artists—among them Thomas Mann, Albert Einstein, Oswald Veblen, Norbert Wiener, Rexford Tugwell, Ernest Hocking—served as sponsors of the conference. At the same time several of its key figures had been participants in the Wroclaw Congress of Intellectuals which was held in Poland last summer and were signatories to the call for a "World

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Congress of Fighters for Peace" which is to be held in Paris at the end of April.

The Credentials Committee reported that 2,823 persons registered for the conference. There were 491 from the fine arts; education, 244; social sciences, 246; mass communications, 202; writing, 276; natural sciences, 140; health, 188; religion, 19; miscellaneous vocations, 53. The arts, sciences and professions were well represented functionally, but not geographically—only 275 delegates, from 21 states, came from outside New York. It was a conference predominantly representative of left-wing intellectual life around New York City.

**Conference preliminaries** and preparations received no particular notice until it was stated by Dr. Shapley that he had requested the State Department to grant visas to a large number of intellectuals from foreign lands, including a delegation from the Soviet Union which would number among its members Shostakovich; the Stalin prize-winning novelist, A. A. Fadeyev; Professor A. I. Oparin, the biologist; Sergei Gerasimov, the film producer.

This landed the conference on the front page. Everyone understood that the Soviet government must attach great importance to the meeting. Rogge in the course of the conference stated that the Russians had been unwilling to send Shostakovich here as a good-will ambassador in the critical days of Stalingrad in 1943. If they were doing so now it was in a "last, desperate hope to help achieve" a better understanding. The majority of Americans wondered, however, whether the real object was not to undermine the Atlantic Pact.

This suspicion, plus the fact that at the previous conference of intellectuals in Wroclaw this country had been subjected to a steady stream of abuse, and not the least by Fadeyev, plus the fact that Soviet intellectual life seemed itself to be in the grip of a violent nationalism, served to provoke a furious reaction to Dr. Shapley's announcement. It was hardly to be expected, one paper declared, that in the circumstances Americans would respond with "sweet reasonableness."

The State Department was immediately deluged with petitions, demands, supplications that the delegations be kept out on the ground that similar meetings could not be held behind the Iron Curtain, that we should not allow our freedom to be used to undermine that freedom, and with equally vigorous demands from the other side that the delegates be allowed in as the best possible proof of freedom's strength.

Whereupon the State Department sought to satisfy its liberal conscience by admitting the delegates from behind the Iron Curtain on the ground that they were official, government delegates, and to appease the Legion, the Catholic War Veterans and similar protesting groups by denying visas to equally distinguished West Europeans and Latin American intellectuals on the ground that as private citizens their coming here had to serve the national interest. Even here it was not completely consistent in granting a visa to the Englishman, Olaf Stapledon:

> Why me? [he asked at the sessions]. I resent the insinuation that I am so harmless.

And most disgraceful of all, in the midst of the opening banquet, immigration officers picked up the Canadian delegation and deported two of its three members.

**This type of** harassment, the intensive telephone campaign to get sponsors to withdraw—"Nothing so intense," quipped Lillian Hellman, "has been seen since the pyramid clubs"—the shouting, fist-waving picket lines created a crisis atmosphere about the sessions. By the time the conference convened, the conferees felt as if they were in a besieged fortress. Men like Shapley kept asking since when had it become "disloyal" to be for peace, and as the final notes of the National Anthem died away, there was a tightness in his voice as he called the conference to order.

The picket lines outside the Waldorf were shrill, turbulent affairs. One lady brandished a flit gun at the "rats," as she called the participants. A red-faced, leather-lunged character kept booming:

> Down with the reds! Down with the pinks! Down with the lefties! Down with the UN!

These were hardly appropriate defenders of Western culture. Nevertheless, it was true that the police kept the pickets from interfering with the conference, that the bulk of the pickets were simple laboring men and women, some of whom were there to demonstrate against religious persecution in Eastern Europe, or because they had kinfolk living under Communist regimes, or were themselves political refugees from such regimes. Dr. Shapley and his associates had every right to be protected in the presentation of their opinion; they were not in a position to insist that it be popular.

**The first question** shot by the press at Dr. Shapley related to his claim that the conference was "an independent, non-political group which had been knowingly, falsely labeled pro-Communist." Professor Shapley objected strenuously to press efforts to ascertain the political character of the conference, insisting that it was a "good-will" meeting and that such queries were irrelevant to the question of peace. He denied vigorously that the Waldorf meeting had any relationship to last summer's conference of intellectuals in Wroclaw or was connected with the forthcoming Paris Congress of Fighters for Peace. But too many people had been left high and dry on the beaches of outraged political honesty, as Communists successively deserted collective security for keeping America out of war, and isolationism for rabid patriotism, to accept at face value the new turn from fierce denunciations of American imperialism to dovelike admonitions of peace. The honesty and independence of the leaders of the conference, their right to criticize American foreign policy, was not the issue; the public felt it

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had a right to know whether the conference, as distinct from prominent individuals in it, was a genuine effort to strengthen the United Nations or under the slogan of "peace" actually was serving the purposes of Soviet foreign policy. In such a determination the strength and role of the Communists was of the greatest relevance.

O. John Rogge concluded his keynote speech with a call for a

> united front of all peace-minded people, regardless of political party, who will unite in a gigantic effort to stop this nation's drive towards war.

The attitude of most Americans to this united front was bluntly stated by Norman Cousins:

> I ask you to believe that the American people, in demonstrating and in speaking out against this conference, are not speaking out against the idea of peace or the need of peace or the possibility of peace. They are speaking out against a small political group in this country which has failed to live up to the rules of the game in a democracy.

The sponsors of the conference regarded such plain speaking as offensive and irrelevant, but most intellectuals felt it was germane and courageous.

Was the conference, then, really dominated by the Communists?

**We take you now** to the ballroom at the Waldorf-Astoria. Eighteen hundred people are jamming it to the topmost balconies. It is the final business session of the conference and the Resolutions Committee is to present its report. Martin Popper of the National Lawyers' Guild presents the major resolution. In offering it he says that the most important thing in the struggle for peace is unity on the widest possible basis. The resolution he is about to present, he says, represents an effort to find the widest area of agreement among the divergent viewpoints represented on the Resolutions Committee. The efforts of the enemies of peace to split the conference had failed. A great peace movement could now be built, a movement in which even the enemies of the conference would be welcome if they were for peace. The main text of the resolution follows:

> To do everything possible to strengthen the United Nations, as the best hope of peace.
>
> To express our greetings and pledge our coöperation to other movements for peace throughout the world, conscious as we are that cultural and religious and labor groups and many others are affirming the will of the world for a peaceful resolution of the present deadlock.
>
> To continue the work begun here so that our countrymen may be roused to protect the peace and to take appropriate measures to bring the decisions of this conference to the attention of the American government and the United Nations, and to undertake an active campaign in the cause of peace.

But only polite applause greets the reading of this resolution and a delegate in the balcony clamors to be heard. Recognized by Dr. Shapley he pleads that the conference not yield to outside pressure by weakening its viewpoint. He urges that the conference unequivocally express its support of the forthcoming Paris Congress and moves an amendment to that effect to the accompaniment of considerable applause. Dr. Shapley consults with Martin Popper and replies that the matter is covered in the second paragraph of the Resolution and would be taken up by the Action Committee after adjournment. This does not satisfy the house. Another delegate rises to voice his dissatisfaction and again moves that the Paris Congress be endorsed by name, and there is more applause. The chairman rules him out of order.

Hermann Herry, architect and conference sponsor, gets the floor. Heatedly he demands a resolution with "teeth" in it. He is opposed, he says, to ineffectual platitudes of the sort intellectuals adopted before the last war. The audience applauds vigorously and the conference managers begin to show signs of apprehension. The dancer, Helen Tamiris, rises in the rear of the hall: "What is worrying people," she advises the platform, "is lack of information on implementation." But the meeting is not mollified by Dr. Allan M. Butler's assurance that implementation would be taken up the next day by the Action Committee. Dr. Shapley calls on Lillian Hellman, who asks the delegates to bear in mind that the Resolutions Committee was made up of a great variety of opinions:

"I beg you not to act irresponsibly."

Down front, from among the delegates, Albert E. Kahn, author of *The Great Conspiracy,* president of the Jewish People's Fraternal Order, member of the Wroclaw Conference and signatory of the Call for the Paris Congress, rises. There is a hush as he is recognized by Dr. Shapley:

> I think this is a magnificent document [he shouts]. . . . What we're interested in doing is achieving the widest possible unity for peace. . . .

As he sits down, Howard Fast, novelist, columnist for the *Sunday Worker,* and, like Kahn, a member of the Wroclaw continuing committee and a convener of the Paris Congress, is recognized:

> Anyone who thinks this Resolution has no teeth in it should get their teeth into today's newspapers. . . . Washington is frothing at the mouth because we have stood together. They have used every tactic to divide us. Don't at this late date be taken in by anyone who wants to play their game. . . .

It is clear the party whips have gone into action. The rebellion is quelled. When the vote is taken only one nay can be heard.

**We have described** this episode in detail because, politically, it revealed where the real controls rested at the conference, who ultimately decided how far the conference would go in denouncing American foreign policy or in tying up openly with the Cominform peace movement. If the conference adopted a resolution noteworthy for its moderation, for its failure to mention the Atlantic Pact, ERP, or to describe any program for peace except the universally acceptable phrase, "to strengthen the United Nations," this was not a defeat for the Communists but calculated policy on their part.

How deadly serious the Communists are about this new popular peace front and how capacious its

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boundaries are to be was indicated by an incident that took place at the panel on writing and publishing, where Fadeyev had been roughly heckled by a group of writers associated with what the Communists regard as a "Trotskyist" magazine—*Politics*. Such *bêtes noires* of Communist intellectual circles as Dwight Macdonald and Mary McCarthy were, therefore, staggered after the panel adjourned to find themselves invited by Howard Fast to a reception held by the National Council of the Arts, Sciences and Professions.

The real nature of this peace front is not to be found in the resolutions. Just as the Waldorf sessions in a hundred different ways attacked every phase of American foreign policy, so will the realistic and practical effect of this new popular front be to emasculate support of American foreign policy and in particular the Atlantic Pact.

Because it was a conference of predominantly left-wing intellectuals, the conference was an interesting study in the complexities and contradictions to be found today within the left-wing camp. It was common gossip that Yugoslavia, which since Tito's break with the Cominform has been excluded from comparable gatherings in Eastern Europe, was present at this one because of insistence on the part of independents. The friendliness, however, with which these representatives of a government denounced as "Trotskyist" were welcomed both by the delegates and the Madison Square Garden audience was unprecedented and could not have made the keepers of Communist orthodoxy happy.

Neither could the applause that greeted Rogge's defense of Anna Louise Strong:

> The injustice to Agnes Smedley by the United States is matched by the injustice to Anna Louise Strong by the Soviet Union. Incidentally, Miss Strong today sent $1,000 toward the defense of the leaders of the Communist Party.

How much this applause embarrassed the stalwarts of Communism was indicated a few days later when the gift was rejected as "tainted" money.

There was a good deal of criticism of the Soviet Union within the conference itself. This was a surprising development in an affair supported by the Communist Party, particularly with representatives of the USSR present. A dramatic exchange took place between Frederick L. Schuman and A. A. Fadeyev, the leader of the Soviet delegation. Fear and hatred between East and West, Schuman declared, was engendered by the inability of the Western democracies

> to give human content to their professed ideals of economic security, social justice, racial and national equality, and international peace

and the parallel inability of the Communists

> to give human content to their professed ideals of individual freedom, personal dignity, political democracy and international peace.

The result was that the Americans found it easier and pleasanter

> to revert to primitive ethnocentrism and xenophobia; to indulge in red-baiting and witch hunts against scapegoats at home; to preach crusades against vice abroad; to cry out fiercely in self-righteous wrath against Russians and Communists. . . .

and the Communist regimes found it easier and pleasanter

> to engage in devil chasing, regimentation, intolerance and ideological fanaticism; to heap coals of fire upon the heads of those who are labeled the agents and lackeys of "American imperialism" and to call upon sorely stricken multitudes for new sacrifices and for blind obedience in the name of fighting capitalist villainy and Social Democratic treachery.

Fadeyev, who followed on the heels of Professor Schuman, found such equations "astonishing":

> I am a guest in your country, but I know that you would want me to speak frankly on this matter. Professor Schuman is mistaken. There are no elements in our country which desire war against the United States or any other country. . . . The important thing for us to understand is that those elements in the United States which would like to see another war against Russia are not the enemies only of the Soviet people, they are also, of course, the enemies of the American people, who, like ourselves, do not want war.

Professor Schuman gained time for a reply:

> I was delighted with Mr. Fadeyev's statement that there are no elements in the USSR which desire war with the United States. I agree entirely with this. I also agree that there are elements in the United States which desire war with the USSR. However, these elements are small and unimportant. . . .

Despite Schuman's semi-retraction, the fact that a speech as sharply critical of the Soviet Union as his was listened to in respectful silence by an audience overwhelmingly pro-Soviet in its viewpoint reflected a profound ideological insecurity behind the façade of Stalinist orthodoxy.

This was the real significance of Norman Mailer's speech, which stunned the 800 people at the panel on writing and publishing. There had been several calls from the audience for the author of *The Naked and the Dead* to take the floor. He had been reluctant to do so. When he finally spoke it was falteringly but with great earnestness:

> I don't believe in peace conferences; they don't do any good. So long as there is capitalism, there is going to be war. Until you have a decent, equitable socialism, you can't have peace. . . . I am going to make myself more unpopular. I am afraid both the United States and the Soviet Union are moving toward state capitalism. There is no future in that. The two systems approach each other more clearly. All a writer can do is tell the truth as he sees it, and to keep on writing. It is bad, perhaps, to inject this pessimism here, but it is the only way I can talk honestly.

Mailer's remarks indicated some of the ideological currents at work in left-wing ranks at the conference and provided a clue to the reasons for the tolerance of criticism of the USSR, the resistance to a resolution lacking "teeth," the friendliness toward the Yugoslavs and Anna Louise Strong.

**There was vigorous** discussion and debate within the panels perhaps because intellectual issues that were skirted at the Waldorf were promptly

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discussed with great bluntness by Americans for Intellectual Freedom. Dwight Macdonald in the writers' panel, after suggesting that the Soviet government might more appropriately have sent us a creative writer rather than a propagandist and intellectual commissar like Fadeyev, went on to ask:

What has happened to Pasternak, Babel, Zostchenko, Akhmatova, Katayev and Pilnyak? Are they alive or dead? Are they in concentration camps or free?

To which Fadeyev replied:

Pasternak is my neighbor in the country, and is now translating Shakespeare into Russian. . . . Zostchenko published a novel in 1947, so that shows he is not persecuted by my government. My questioner seems to be frightened because writers are criticized. But in Russia writers don't stop writing merely because they are criticized.

A few blocks away, however, Max Eastman was calling the roll of a much longer list of purged and vanished writers—33 in all.

Robert Lowell, poet and Pulitzer prize-winner, asked the Russian novelist Pavlenko about the status of conscientious objectors in the Soviet Union. Pavlenko replied that he did not know the laws on the subject because he had not waited to be asked to fight in the last war but had volunteered, and that he hoped even at 100 years of age to be able to fight for his country.

In reply to a question posed by Nicholas Nabokov, a composer sitting in the audience at the Fine Arts Panel, Shostakovich said that he agreed with Soviet attacks on Stravinsky, Schönberg and Hindemith. Aaron Copland, however, who spoke in the same panel, rejected the notion that one had to choose between "the mass appeal music of a Shostakovich and the musical radicalism of a Schönberg." Turning to Shostakovich, he said he had no desire to embarrass the distinguished composer but saw no reason why it should not be pointed out that all cultural interchange became difficult

when all foreign music from the West is condemned in advance. . . . As a composer from the West I naturally find the attitude extreme. It makes no more sense to reject the artistic findings of a foreign composer than it would be to reject the scientific investigations of a foreigner. One can never tell in advance what will stimulate the imagination of an artist. . . . We have earned the right to have American music heard throughout the world. The Soviet Union is impoverishing itself in the cultural sphere by not encouraging every possible musical exchange with our country.

When Shostakovich, in reading his prepared script, denounced the "instigators of a new war" or "the aggressive activity of that small clique of hatemongers," the words did not seem his own. When, however, he spoke of his own postwar compositions:

I lost contact with the people—and I failed. My work found response only among the narrow strata of sophisticated musicians—but they failed to meet with approval among the broad masses of listeners,

one sensed that the artist was speaking of the major problem confronting the creative worker who is conscious of his social responsibilities.

**A. I. Oparin,** acting secretary of the Biological Sciences Section of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, spoke at the natural-science panel. He defended Lysenko as a "theoretical scientist," a "research scientist" and a "talented organizer." But Henry Wallace, speaking at the same session, expressed skepticism that Lysenko's approach "would greatly improve the yielding power of any of our cereals," although there were "profound philosophic implications" in that approach. It was precisely these philosophic implications of Lysenko's doctrine, however, that H. J. Muller, Nobel prize-winner in genetics and old-time friend of many Soviet geneticists, subjected to the sharpest attack at the Freedom House rally:

. . . Although there are some important differences between Nazi and Communist views, both pervert genetics in such a way as to make inevitable the conclusion that the races and classes of mankind today are arranged in hereditary hierarchies corresponding to the economic hierarchies. From this it would follow that if a child were transferred at birth from one group to another, its inborn biological handicap or advantage could not be canceled in its generation.

Oparin's reply to this was that Soviet scientists reject the transference of biological laws into the realm of human and social relations. Oparin's attitude toward Soviet science as a part of world science was more moderate than repeated attacks in the Soviet press on "cosmopolitan" science had led one to expect. He acknowledged that Soviet science,

connected with world science, is in a state of creative interaction with it. . . . But at the same time Soviet science possesses a qualitative singularity . . .

This was much more restrained than the official Soviet viewpoint that Soviet science, no more than any other part of Soviet culture, could be supra-class, universal and non-national, a viewpoint which Sidney Hook effectively polemicized against at Freedom House:

Science by its very nature recognizes only what follows from evidence and what does not. The laws of science do not change wtih national boundaries. . . . To maintain that there are class truths in science . . . is to suggest that the competing claims of doctrine to be true are to be settled not by logic and experiment but by class struggle and war. . . . The most serious consequence of the Soviet belief in national, class, and party truths is that it makes the quest *for objectivity*, at the very outset, altogether impossible.

But it is beyond the scope of this report to cover exhaustively the many brilliant and able papers presented at the two meetings. We have no doubt they will appear in book form and will amply repay careful study. In the course of his speech at Freedom House Bryn Hovde declared that

Almost never in history have the great issues of any time been developed, confronted and fought from such diametrically opposite foundations in science, art and thought as those that now divide the world.

To which this reporter, after a weekend of picket lines, plenary sessions, rallies and counter-rallies, can only add "amen."

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# SPRING BOOK NUMBER

## ON A CERTAIN CONFLICT IN FOREIGNERS

**by Max Lerner**

In 1869 James Russell Lowell, angered by the hoity-toity attacks the English travelers were leveling at American culture, wrote an *Atlantic* piece called "On a Certain Condescension in Foreigners." That would have little meaning today. What one notices, on dipping into the mass of European commentary on America, is less of condescension than of a split inside the minds of the foreign writers. They are drawn to America, yet they recoil from it. They need it, yet they have agonized doubts about it. Even in so favorable a book as Robert Payne's just published *Report on America* (John Day; $3.50) you get one profile of the split. You get other profiles in more hostile writings, such as P. M. S. Blackett's *Fear, War, and the Bomb* (Whittlesey House; $3.50), and the articles by Richard Crossman and J. B. Priestley, and Harold Laski's recent book on American democracy, and the writings of Evelyn Waugh, Cyril Connolly and Jean-Paul Sartre.

The split is most clearly visible in the commentary that has been somewhat untidily gathered together in two recent eyes-on-America books—André Visson's *As Others See Us* (Doubleday; $3) and Fred Vanderschmidt's *What the English Think of Us* (McBride; $3). I pick two rather disparate items from them. Do you know about the "Athenian complex"? It is the attitude of some of the European intellectuals who feel they must play a cultural Greece to the powerful American Rome, and—even while conquered—take the conqueror captive. And do you know about what might be called the "steak complex"? It is the belief, apparently widespread among the plain people of Britain, that the reason why American tennis and Olympic stars and prize-fighters gained their recent victories was that they brought hundreds of pounds of steak over with them and gorged on it while their British rivals had to get along on rations. The point about both is not that they are critical comments—there have been many in the past that were more critical—but that they seem to arise out of some despair akin to a sense of impotence.

To get a glimpse again into some of the older attitudes toward America, when the Europeans were speaking from the lofty perch of their own power and assurance, is an adventure in perspective that should be chastening to both sides. The classic anthology of British opinion is Allan Nevins' *America Through British Eyes* (Oxford; $6). Originally published in 1923 as *American Social History as Recorded by British Travelers*, it has now been revised, with a half-dozen authors added to cover the past quarter-century. A second anthology is Henry Steele Commager's *America in Perspective: the U. S. Through Foreign Eyes* (published by Random House in 1947, now available in a 35-cent Pelican Mentor edition). Nevins has done his editing as a social historian, Commager as a political analyst of American traits and institutions. Nevins covers the British observers intensively, while Commager roams over the whole field, including the French, Germans, Poles, Spaniards, and adding even a Russian and a Chinese view. The two books supplement each other.

To form a trilogy with them there comes now another anthology of European travel accounts, *This Was America*, richly and shrewdly compiled by Oscar Handlin, of Harvard (Harvard Press; $6). You might have thought that the field of foreign travelers had been thoroughly worked over by this time, but Professor Handlin comes with fresh zeal and a knowing spade, and digs up people who have never been anthologized before and a number of whom he has himself had to translate for the first time. He gives us some delicious insights into the life and the landscape, the flora and the human fauna, of the America of the past two centuries, especially some comments on American women and their cultural behavior, and the problems of racial mixture, and incidentally some glimpses of exotic life and love in cities like New Orleans. But what gives the book flavor is the solid fact that Professor Handlin, who has dealt with immigration history in his other writings, knows America through the eyes of immigrants. For them America has always been a freshly minted image, and that is how it appears in these travel accounts.

**One cannot help** feeling, however—taking the three historical anthologies as a unit—a somewhat archaic note in the judgments of the foreign visitors. Crevecœur, to be sure, still has the timeless accent of someone writing about Paradise in the dawn of the world, and Tocqueville still stands up because he wrote with the humility of

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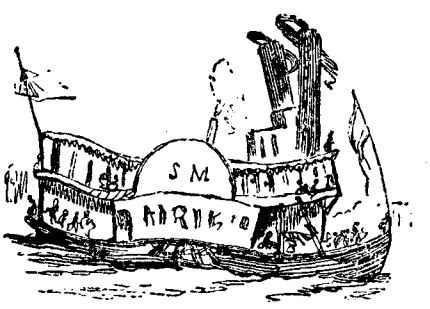
a great political analyst. But Nevins gives a whole clump of selections from English writers, like Basil Hall and Mrs. Trollope (the novelist's mother), who wrote out of "a Tory condescension" toward an America they still considered a barbaric colony. Charles Dickens, who was more of a radical than a Tory in his social judgments, blurted out in his *American Notes* some healthy home truths about American materialism and dollar worship, but he said them in an unendearing manner. And Matthew Arnold ushered in a whole school of criticism by asserting that America is simply not "interesting" and not "elevating."

These traveled, sophisticated, wise men of Europe had come to take inventory of the rough manners, the rich raiment, the fabled wealth of this *parvenu* who was knocking at the gate of Western power with an insistence not to be denied. They passed judgment on America's morals, its inns, bedbugs, spitting and chewing, strong drink, factory girls, high society. Later they examined its machines, slums, political corruption, Southern lynching, Midwest isolationism, materialism, absorption in sports, yellow journalism, religious sects, crime and gangsterism, movies and radio, jazz and jive, psychoanalysis and neurotic women, ways of making love, novels, skyscrapers and bathtubs, businessmen and labor leaders, booms and busts. Surely there has never been in history any comparable concentration on a people by the whole world.

**In our generation**—and some of the later entries in both Nevins and Commager foreshadow it—commentary on America has entered a radically new phase. Books are no longer written out of an aristocratic condescension, or even out of an enthusiasm for democracy, which was actually the reverse side of the shield. It is no longer America who knocks at the gate as a newcomer, peddling its wares of democracy, science, technology, and asking the world's approval for them. It is no longer America that is judged, nor Europe that sits in judgment. The only one who by his criticism can still bring the walls of abuse tumbling down about him is a Russian like Ilya Ehrenburg, and that is part of the political strategy of the cold war. The critics are still active, even in non-Communist circles. Visson spells that out perhaps too emphatically and with a why-do-they-malign-this-wonderful-country querulousness. But what is now said and thought about America is said and thought in the shadow of European collapse, the Marshall Plan, the $250 billion American annual national product, the North Atlantic Pact, the new Truman Plan for developing underdeveloped areas. A cat may look at a king, and may bare its claws as well as purr at him; but there is never any question who is cat and who is king.

I do not set this down in a chauvinist spirit, but simply as a matter of fact. One phase of the split personality of Europe today is the consciousness of American power and success. But that in itself does not adequately explain why European man, for all his jibes, is drawn to us. There is also the fact of the inner kinship of spirit. There has been from the start (and the Handlin and Commager and Nevins anthologies bear it out amply) a basic identity between the American and the type-man of the modern era. To the question wonderfully put a hundred and seventy years ago by Crevecœur in his *Letters from an American Farmer*—"What then is the American, this new man?"—some of the best minds of Europe as well as of America have since addressed themselves. I think that part of the answer is now clear enough. The American is the concentrated embodiment of Western man as a whole, more sharply delineated here, developed under more favorable conditions, but with most of the essential traits present. "America," as Robert Payne puts it in his book, "is Europe with all the European walls broken down."



**Consider some** of the trends and traits of Western man. (I am trying deliberately here not to describe the American alone, but a type which has cropped up all over Europe as well since the Reformation and the rise of science.) He is rootless and restless. He has broken with status, and moves as freely up and down the ladder of wealth and class rank as he moves over large areas, conquering space. He rifles the sciences as he rifles the continents, quenchless in his thirst for experience. He is this-worldly, not other-worldly, with a sharp sense of time and its uses. Accustomed to thinking in terms of the attainable, he is optimistic, with a belief in progress and a respect for technical skills and material success. He is *homo faber*, stamping his imprint not so much on art or ideas as on products and on machines that make products. He believes in whatever can be touched, grasped, measured. He is a technical man, whose absorption is not with *to what good* but with *how*.

Unlike men of previous ages, it is not salvation he is after, nor virtue, nor saintliness, nor beauty, nor status. He is an amoral man of energy, mastery and power. He is the double figure in Marlowe, of Tamerlane and Dr. Faustus, the one sweeping across the plains to break down the barriers of earlier civilizations, the other breaking the taboos against knowledge and power, even at the cost of his soul. The great themes of the Renaissance and Reformation have been fulfilled in him—the discovery of new areas, the charting of the skies, the lure of power, the realization of self in works, the magic of science, the consciousness of the individual, the sense of the unity of history.

When Western man looks at the America of today he sees his own traits and basic drives writ large.

It is the recognition of this fact that gives some importance to a recent English book that might otherwise

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seem merely eccentric. I refer to Wyndham Lewis' *America and Cosmic Man,* now available only in an English edition (Doubleday will publish it here on June 9). Lewis, who is painter, novelist, political philosopher, polemicist, has a place in history as the leader of the Vorticist school of art. His book on America is not without some trace of his method as a painter. It is rambling, chaotic, opinionated, and contains some statements and interpretations that would give a trained historian apoplexy. Yet there is a lustiness about the book. Here is no European of the Old School talking in polished, elegiac sentences of Democracy, Freedom and the Good Life. Throughout his book Lewis hangs doggedly to the thesis that "the logic of the geographical position and history of the U. S. leads to . . . the ultimate formation of a society that will not be as other societies, but an epitome of all societies."

Obviously this is overstated and inflated, but it has the core of truth which in my own way I have tried to set down above. The American writing about his own country tries often *to think himself out of it*, makes the effort of detaching himself from his own skin. The best European commentators, for all their critical scrutiny, *have thought themselves into the mind of the American*, and they need not acquire the method of an anthropologist because so much of the American mind is potential in them. The trivia of accent, language, mores, cultural idiom are often hard to master, but while these are the things that make America different and difficult, there are more important things that make it the cultural *persona* (in Jung's sense) of the rest of the modern world. Thus Wyndham Lewis writes not from outside but from inside the periphery of what he is describing.

**The author of** *Time and Western Man* and of *The Art of Being Ruled* is attracted to power, but he sees that America is power in its grandest as well as its crassest form—the power of the economic minority held in leash by repeated revolts of the democratic majority. He sees "the beautiful polarity of Hamilton and Jefferson," and glimpses that the idea of equilibrium in American life is a tension between opposing vitalities. He is fascinated by America as an ethnic mixture, and by the vitality the mixture brings with it. But granted his truth that there is an ethnic pluralism in America which holds the world in microcosm, he almost (but not quite) glosses over the fact that racism still runs like a bloody skein through American life. The possession of diverse ethnic strains is one matter, the equal treatment of them in social fact is quite another. But I will forgive Lewis a good deal because he has the brashness to break away from the tradition that a European must deplore the rootlessness of Americans:

> It is a matter of surprise [he blurts out] that the bluff of the *rooted* boys has never been called—I mean radically so, by a statement of the excellence of what is the opposite of rootedness. . . . The sight of the *root* depresses me; and I know in that country that everyone has left his roots over in Poland or Ireland, in Italy, or in Russia, so we are all floating around in a rootless Elysium. . . . No American worth his salt should go looking around for a root. . . . For is not that tantamount to giving up the most conspicuous advantage of being American, which is surely to have turned one's back on race, caste, and all that pertains to the rooted state?

BRITISH WOODCUTS FROM THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

This is, of course, somewhat leaky reasoning. For Lewis chooses to define "roots" in the sense only of the feudal and aristocratic traditions of Europe. They are not the only possible traditions, and part of America's greatness is to have built up a great tradition of democratic *inclusiveness*, as opposed to the traditional exclusive symbols of caste and race and aristocracy. But Lewis' exaggerations are in a healthy direction.

**A very different** sort of British writer on America is D. W. Brogan, a Scotsman who is equally at home at Cambridge in England, Cambridge in Massachusetts, and the Sorbonne. His *American Themes* (Harper; $3.50) is a collection of magazine pieces written over almost two decades, mainly for British periodicals and generally using a book as a taking-off point for a brief essay. What is important about his book is less the subjects it treats (the American language, Calvin Coolidge, Al Capone, the Negroes, the movies, American novels, the Constitution, the Holmes-Pollock letters, American philosophy, the Adams family, Jefferson, Jackson, Mr. Dooley, FDR) or the illumination he casts (which is always steady and considerable) or the style (which is magisterial, brilliant, mandarin, ironic and

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allusive, a little like a less naughty Laski) or even the tone of semi-detached amusement which never becomes condescension (for Brogan knows and likes America too much for that) but is a little like that of a learned museum director showing his slightly incredible specimens to an unbelieving delegation of visitors.

What is really important is that a European intellectual like Brogan should, for all the distance between European culture and ours, find himself so completely at home in ours. Partly it is an achievement of Brogan's scholarship, but mainly it is another proof that the salient traits of Europe and America have moved closer together as they have emerged more clearly, and that it no longer requires the massive effort of a Bryce to perform Bryce's function of mediation.

**I have spoken** of the suction force America exerts. But there is another phase of the world's attitude—the fear of America's power, the recoil from the dependence on it and from everything which that dependence implies.

Our propagandists have fixed their minds so hard on the Russian criticisms of us that we are in danger of overlooking that the non-Russian world—including millions in our special sphere of influence, Western Europe—is also split about us. The hatred the Russians bear us is the hatred of rivals, while the recoil of the Western Europeans from us is the recoil of dependents. It would be foolish to argue from the extravagance of Russian propagandists that the Russian rulers are very different from our rulers, or the Russian people from ours.

I heard a television commentator the other day, searching about for some way of describing the operations of the Politburo, finally compare it with one of our own big corporations. In his innocence he was more deeply right than he knew. There is more affinity between the American businessman and the Russian commissar than there is between either of them and the worn-out aristocrats or medieval-minded clerics or feudal potentates of Europe and the Middle East. Both of them have a fear of ideas and symbols they cannot understand, both have a feeling for technical means and tangible values, both are extroverts, both have a feel for power, both have an organic optimism. The struggle between Russia and America is a power-struggle, and not what it is depicted—a Holy War of two incompatible bodies of doctrine, between which there is the darkness and depth of the Pit. It is not even a struggle between the barbarian hordes and the Roman Empire. From the standpoint of a West European, it is not always clear which is barbarian and which Rome.

A civil war rages within the European heart even about the America which is presumably saving European man from Russia. This is obvious from the material which Visson has gathered in France and Belgium and Switzerland and England, and Vanderschmidt in England. Both authors deplore it, but it is none the less a fact. It is one thing to be conquered by an alien people and an alien idea. One can write it down, as the French did after 1940, and the Czechs in the past year, to catastrophe and diabolism. But to be *saved* by America is not without its sense of humiliation—to be an Anchises carried out of the flames of burning Troy on the shoulders of the vigorous Aeneas. It means, does it not, that one is old and feeble and feckless, which is not an easy thing to admit, especially to oneself. That is one reason why there is the almost manic compulsion of the European intellectuals to think of themselves as the Greece to our Rome.

Since they are so deeply like us in so many essentials, they ask themselves why we have so much and they so little. The answer cannot be our virtues and their vices, or our deserts and their defects. As they see the answer, it is partly luck—the luck of natural resources, the luck of being cut off by oceans from the ravages of wars. And, just as much as luck, it is (as they see it) our willingness to pay a heavy cost for what we have: the willingness to be ruled by our gadgets and machines, by our business giants, by our demagogues and corruption, by our press barons, by our advertising slogans and radio commercials, by our spoiled women and even more spoiled children. To the European mind, with all its good will, the very things that make us more powerful make us also more boorish, the things that make us more like giants make us also less like men. Thus the attitude toward America that I piece together from Visson and Vanderschmidt is compounded of grudging gratitude, envious admiration for prowess, resentful pride and uneasy fear—a fear, may I add, not only of the Russia against which Western Europe seeks protection but also of the America toward which it turns.

**I see no reason** why Americans should get hot under the collar about this split in Europeans. There is basis enough for it, God knows, given the pitiless polarization of world power between us and the Russians; given the fact that we are aiding Europe not so much out of a sense of human brotherhood as out of the fears of our own ruling groups; given the hysterical waves of emotion that sweep over our land; given the fact that, in a clash between America and Russia, Europe itself would prove expendable and become another Lost Atlantis sunk under the dread weight of atomic violence. And even if America wins the next war, and Europe is somehow salvaged, there is a valid doubt in the minds of many Europeans as to what would be the quality of an American Century and of the *pax Americana.*

There are sensitive souls among us who shudder and shake with rage every time Crossman, Priestley, Connolly, Sartre or Laski says something drastic about the United States. Their

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view seems to be that we have to take it from the Russians, but why should we take it from the intellectuals of Western Europe whom we are protecting from the Russian commissars? These sensitive souls no longer *examine* arguments about America. They *smell* them for traces of anti-American—and therefore, of course, pro-Russian—odor. The American evaluation of European criticism has become one long proboscis.

I can understand why the American ruling groups welcome this sort of intellectual sleuthing. In the midst of preparations against the Russians, they are annoyed at having to be deflected from the main chance by criticism of our own institutions. They hope that they can have their political war with Russia and yet not pay the price for it in scrutiny of America itself. They want to damn the Russian symbols by comparison with ours (labor camps against freedom, high living standards against poverty), without stirring to make the social reality conform more closely to our own symbols. What infuriates them most is to have Laski challenge the impact of the businessman upon American culture, or to have Sartre (in his "Respectful Prostitute") use an allegory about lynching to flay the timidity and credulity of American public opinion.

**If one asks** why we should have to take these barbs from the intellectuals of the European countries which have become our dependents, the answer is clear. You will find it expressed eloquently in the book by Robert Payne, *Report on America.* Like Wyndham Lewis, Payne is in love with America. But, unlike Lewis, what he loves is not the brute vitality of our people but the ideals of our democracy. He is repelled by Marxism and fascinated by such prophetic voices out of the American past as Emerson and Melville and Whitman. He is not content, as the defensive crowd is, to accept the American actuality uncritically, especially on the question of racism. Like Laski, he tests the actuality against the democratic ideal. The big difference is that Laski delights in laying bare the elements of capitalist power and the capitalist ethos which all but doom the democratic ideal. Payne, on the other hand, is less of a political theorist than he is a poet. When he sees the gap between the racist actuality and the democratic ideal, he resorts to an impassioned, often highly rhetorical, pleading to Americans to bridge the gap. Again and again he drives home the point that the only hope for saving the people of the world, especially the colored races of Asia and Africa, from Communism is to wipe out our own racism. He makes the American democratic ideal a universal and categorical imperative. The trouble is that, without a social theory of his own, apart from the democratic rhetoric, he has no vantage point (as Laski has) from which to aim his shafts.

In one essential respect Payne is right. The ruling groups of America forget that what gives America its stature and power is its great symbols—high living standards, the machine, freedom for ideas, ethnic diversity, racial democracy. If we profit from the qualities of our defects, let us repair the defects of our qualities. If we stand by our symbols, let us also be willing to be damned by our failure to live up to them. The great truth of Payne's book, which one salvages from much of the rhetoric, is that there is an America of which all the symbols could be true. The reason why the Paynes and Laskis and Sartres invoke it so fervently is because, as Western men, they have become involved in the destiny of the American venture. For them, as for so many of us, criticism of America has become the only relevant criticism because it is criticism of the world's best hope. When they criticize us they are criticizing something that they have come to regard as their own, something they are part of. If the great America they (and some of us) envisage could awaken, if democracy could be socialized and socialism democratized, the malaise of the European mind would be healed, and the tragic debate which European man is carrying on within himself could be ended.

## "The Commendablest Phrases of a Language"

**by James R. Newman**

"PROVERBS," observed John Hay, "are invaluable treasures to dunces with good memories." As one who can scarcely ever remember the proverb suitable to the occasion I am less cut by this unkindness than perhaps I should be. For having just now finished reading the second edition of the splendid *Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs* I must confess to being imbued with a great new love of proverbs. Not that every proverb here presented is a favorite; nor that every favorite proverb is here presented; nor that one can fail to recognize that most of the proverbs included are as dead as a herring, or, as one might say, as "dead as Queen Anne the day after she dy'd." Yet the book makes quite clear what was meant by Florio when he wrote that "Proverbs are the pith, the proprieties, the proofes, the purities, the elegancies, as the commonest so the commendablest phrases of a language"; and I not only join in Samuel Palme's lament but consider his the true explanation of the proverb's downfall: "Wise men make proverbs, but fools repeat 'em."

THE OXFORD DICTIONARY OF ENGLISH PROVERBS. Compiled by William George Smith. Second edition revised by Sir Paul Harvey. With an Introduction by Janet Heseltine (The Oxford University Press; $13.50).

Janet Heseltine's introduction to the *Dictionary*, without being pedantic, is a learned and readable essay on the rise and fall of this form of literature and speech. An early example of the English proverb found in an eighth-century letter by Wynfrith, the North-umbrian missionary, is the familiar "Delays are dangerous," except that there it reads, in translation, "a coward [?sluggard] often misses glory in

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some high enterprise; therefore he dies alone."

The homilies and chronicles were full of proverbs taken from the Bible and from the writings of Church Fathers; soon they were enriched by materials of foreign origin extracted from Greek and Roman literature, from French and other Continental fables and romances. The art of rhetoric, so thoroughly cultivated in the Middle Ages, employed the proverb as one of its chief adornments. Proverbs were used to awaken attention in introducing a discourse or sermon; they served to point a moral in an age when men were not content merely to nibble daintily at didactic ethics. Medieval secretaries were well advised to keep on hand lists of proverbs (some of which have been preserved) for the drafting of letters on the formal lines "laid down by the *Ars Dictandi* of the schools."

By the middle of the fourteenth century, proverbs were being widely disseminated through the writings of Gower, Lydgate, Chaucer and their contemporaries. As a scholar who loved "to have at his beddes heed Twenty bookes clad in blak or reed," and as an observant traveler who enjoyed being with people and carefully noted what they said and did, Chaucer was a master of the growing lexicon of platitudes. In the tale of Melibeus he could exercise, with modifications that reflected his genius as a poet and satirist, the medieval "love of sententiousness," which he shared, and thus he gave his hearers "a moral tale vertuous" with "more of proverbes, than ye han herd bifore."

**Printed books** gradually took over the role of manuscript or the spoken word; thus proverbs were ingrained even more deeply into literature. From Caxton's press came the *Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers*, a dreary collection translated from the French, which nevertheless went through three editions in twelve years. Travelers on the Continent brought back Italian, Spanish and French works and, as Miss Heseltine points out, the proverbial wisdom of other peoples were put into "fresh English words" and absorbed, often without a trace of their origin remaining, into the writing and speaking habits of the English.

The stream reached its crest in Elizabethan times. The age was "soaked in proverbs." They were spoken, written and invented by scholars and wits, by the Queen herself and by ordinary men. John Heywood's *Dialogue Conteining Proverbes* and Thomas Wilson's *Arte of Rhetorique* were among the books studied by "every young writer of the day." Drayton wrote an unfortunate sonnet in proverbs; and in 1601 Thomas Jones, M.P., made a speech in Commons on a Bill to avoid the Double Payment of Debts, composed entirely of proverbs. Though Jones favored passage of the bill, the speech is not to be recommended.

Yet of all these ardent practitioners, it was Shakespeare alone who used the old puns and the new, the dictes, sayings, maxims, aphorisms, adages "old say'd saws" and platitudes with distinction and originality. "Love's Labor Lost," Miss Heseltine reminds us, was "crammed with puns, allusions, play upon words, and play upon proverbs, which would all at once be caught up by the audience of the day." In later plays he sometimes parodied prevailing literary fashions, but the proverb, more or less faithfully repeated, remains for him a remarkably effective and evocative instrument. "Constant dropping wears the stone" recurs in his plays in many forms; "Hamlet" has its share of old adages, and not merely those mouthed by Polonius; the jest made "by Lear's poor, shivering fool, when all around him he sees the elements, his master's wits, and his own world dissolving" ("And I'll go to bed at noon"?) is the perfect example of Shakespeare's skill in the use of trite sayings: for no one but he, writes Miss Heseltine, would have "dared to let a heart break on a proverb."

**Ben Jonson** had a lesser opinion of the value of proverbs (they were useful chiefly, he thought, to "illuminate a cooper's or a constable's wit," and Mr. Downright in "Every Man in His Humor" has "not so much as a good phrase in his belly, but all old iron and rusty proverbs"), and indeed within a few decades this literary fashion of more than three centuries began to wane. By the time Chesterfield was advising his son that recourse to proverbs was proof of "having kept bad and low company," scholars and antiquarians had begun to collect proverbs and use was giving way to lore. The decline, to be sure, was neither sudden nor absolute. Old proverbs survived, new ones continued to be invented, and as recently as the nineteenth century they often were to be found in novels and in the writings of Victorian moralists. The literary conventions of our own period, however, as rigidly condemn the use of proverbs—except by way of irony—as earlier conventions required it.

**At least three** circumstances attendant upon this change of taste may be noted. The first, writes Miss Heseltine, is "that the history of the use and disuse of proverbs is a progression from the concrete to the abstract." The evolution of other literary forms, of all intellectual and speculative expression, for that matter, follows, with many turnings and regressions, the same direction. But in so far as the proverb is peculiarly a form of folk expression, it loses contact with its richest source as it departs from everyman's everyday experiences and observations. Though truly, how the cock, the sow, the rat, the louse, the weather, the wench, the lawyer, the dog, the doctor, the liar, the thief, the hypocrite, the horse, the priest and the goose behave is of no less concern to the scientist, philosopher and literary man than it is to the proverb maker.

The second point to remark is that proverbs, even if no longer uttered sententiously and with conscious purpose, have found their way into the idiom of the language and are used "insensitively." As the child is father to the man, so the proverb is the parent of contemporary modes of expression. It has played a not inconsiderable

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part in determining the rhythm, emphasis and timing of our literature and speech, just as it was formerly the surrogate of the ethical principles and precepts defining our culture.

And the third point is that for all the intellectual gains accruing to us by virtue of the trend from the concrete to the abstract, our spoken language is poorer in having lost the habit of the proverb. Only a bore or a Senator will remark that Rome was not built in a day, that all is not gold that glitters, that not a stone should be left unturned, that misfortunes never come single, or that a soft answer turneth away wrath. Yet there is reason to doubt that the manner in which these same sentiments are uttered today—and of course they are uttered, by logical positivists, by statesmen, bankers, newsboys and barbers—conveys the thought (if there be any) equally well. The coin of proverbs has been defaced by use and misuse; still the defaced token retains its metal and even the symbol of authority, where its modern counterpart of exchange is often no more convincing than a mere bookkeeping transaction.

**But now** let me set down some examples, partially to illustrate what has been said. Observe how the proverb goes flat with refinement.

"An ass endures his burden but not more than his burden" is surely a better image than the insipid "Enough is enough." The banal aphorism about falling between two stools derives from the vigorous "Between two stoles, the ars goth to grwnd."

A favorite, which I was happy to find—"He will not change his old *Mumpsimus* for the new *Sumpsimus*" —is here fully glossed (see page 88 for clarification), and it occurred to me, as I saw it again, that it is the perfect rebuff for the salesman seeking to persuade you of the advantages of the new gyro-synchro-auto-hydro-turbo mesh. "Charity begins at home" is more vapid than Wyclif's "Charite schuld bigyne at hem-self," or even than "Charity and beating begins at home," from Beaumont and Fletcher.

In place of the infinitely dull articles on the problems of marriage, to be found as regular magazine fare, there is the succinct old adage: "When a couple are newly married the first month is honeymoon or smick-smack; the second is hither and thither; the third is thwick-thwack; the fourth the Devil take them that brought thee and I together."

Many proverbs which sound as though they had been recently coined turn out to be centuries old. "The Crocodile," said Lyly in his *Euphues* (1579), "shrowdeth great treason under most pitiful teares." It was Cato who warned, *"Inter os atque offam multa intervenire posse,"* more modernly: "Manye thynges fall betweene ye cuppe and the mouth," or "Much falls between the chalice and the chin," or "There is many a slip," etc. "I am ded as dorenail" was familiar in the thirteenth century; "A dogge hath a day" in the fifteenth; "Tell it not in Gath" was used by Wyclif ("Woleth ze not telle in Geth, ne telle ze in . . . Aschalon"); "In one ear and out the other" found a place in Chaucer's *Troilus* ("Oon ere it herde, att' other out it wente"); getting a horse to drink when you had got him to water was a problem that had turned into a proverb by 1175; and "to kick the bucket" does not derive, say, from Chicago but rather from Norfolk (England) where the beam from which a slaughtered pig is suspended is called the "bucket" and thus for centuries the phrase has meant "to die."

The famous goose is older than the Borgias, the Piccolominis or the Percys; but of the many versions of her fate none is better than Lyly's: "A man . . . had a goose, which eurie daie laid him a golden egge, hee . . . kild his goose, thinking to haue a mine of golde in her bellie, and finding nothing but dung, . . . wisht his goose aliue."

"Who buies land buies war" is not altogether without its moral for us; nor is "All the weapons of war will not arm fear"; and "Who draweth his sword against his prince must throw away the scabbard" is a more eloquent statement of the problem of "disloyalty" than has fallen from the lips of J. Edgar Hoover. And to President Truman, concerned with the problem of subversion, I commend Bacon's "Lett Princes . . . not be without some person of great Militarye valew . . . for the repressing of seditions. . . . But lett such one, be an assured one, . . . orels the remedy is warse than the disease." "Auoyd your children," warned John Heywood in 1546, "small pitchers have wide eares" —still good by progressive-education standards and by the maxims of Freud.

**In these pages** I learned for the first time of "Pee and Kue"; of bringing "Pepper to Hindostan," "Salt to Dysart and puddings to Tranent"; of the advantage of inflicting upon an assailant a "Recumbentibus" (guaranteed "to smot in-two both helme and mayle"); of coming to shoe the Pasha's horse and getting instead the beetle's leg; of Tweedledum and Tweedledee (orginally used, it would seem, of two rival musicians); of the "Ring of a Rush," the "Ring of Gyges" and the "Ring of Polycrates"; of Time described as "a file that wears and makes no noise"; of not trusting "though he were my brother, He that winketh with one eye and looketh with the other"; of how and why "It would vex a dog to see a pudding creep"; of the Vicar of Bray and of the impossibility of doing two things at once ("A man cannot whistle and drink at the same time").

Also, it was high time to learn the origins of "No case: abuse the plaintiff's attorney" (*c.* 1600); or the early version "where greet fyr hath longe time endured . . . ther dwellth som vapour of warmness" (Chaucer); or that things were so hectic in the days of James I that it was thought "No newis is better than evill newis"; or that putting a man's nose out of "ioynte" was a figure of speech in 1581, while keeping it "hard to the grindstone" was a practice remarked on in 1532; or that "oisters" were not to be eaten, even in 1577, during the "foure hot moneths of the yeare, that is Maie, Iune, Iulie & August, which are void of the letter R"; or that it rained "dogs and polecats" in 1653; or that

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Lyly observed (?) the aversion of bulls to red rags; or that the Church was properly tagged for its venality in "No penny, no paternoster" (Tyndale, 1528); or that having "one foot in the grave" (*i.e.*, "Thy graue is open, thy one fote in the pyt") was a common saying in 1509; or that "paying through the nose" meant paying through the nose long before the seventeenth century; or that the celebrated idiots' refrain, "In time of peace prepare for war," stems from Vegetius; or that long before the appearance of Dr. Fishbein's Home Medical Adviser (*viz.* 1500) it was commonly known that "The best physicians are Dr. Diet, Dr. Quiet, and Dr. Merryman"—obviously an even greater threat to the AMA, should the proverb leak out, than socialized medicine; or that Pliny, in Holland's translation, wrote, "When an house is readie to tumble downe, the mice goes out of it before," which Shakespeare in "The Tempest" gave as "A rotten carcass of a boat . . . the very rats Instinctively have quit it"; or that "Rich men are stewards for the poor" (1552) which is just, after all, what the NAM always says they are, so why raise taxes?; or that "saving one's bacon" dates from the sixteenth century; or that Chaucer knew of "sixes and sevens" ("sexe and sevene"); or that the "twinkelynge of an yze" (Wyclif) was a measure of time even before Bulova; or that the "rap" was a counterfeit coin in eighteenth-century Ireland and thus not to give even a rap was to give very little indeed.

A fat, comfortable, impeccably edited volume of inexhaustible richness and variety. In gathering these samples of its contents I can only hope, as did Florio, that what was "a paine to me [will be] a gaine to thee."

## Lafcadio Herun-san

**by Malcolm Cowley**

NO AMERICAN WRITER of the nineteenth century had a stranger life than Lafcadio Hearn. He was born in 1850 on the Ionian island of Santa Maura—the ancient Leucadia, which explains his given name—and in 1904 his ashes were buried in a Buddhist cemetery in Tokyo. His ancestry was Maltese on his mother's side and hence may be taken as a mixture of Phoenician, Arab, Norman, Spanish and Italian; on his father's side it was Anglo-Irish with —Lafcadio liked to think—a touch of Gypsy. Adopted by a wealthy great-aunt, Sarah Brenane, he was educated by private tutors in Dublin and at Catholic schools in England and France. He was a British subject until he became a naturalized Japanese at the age of 46; but he always regarded himself as an American writer.

> Yes; [he said in a letter to an English friend in Japan] I have got out of touch with Europe altogether, and think of America when I make comparisons. At nineteen years of age, after my people had been reduced from riches to poverty by an adventurer—and before I had seen anything of the world except in a year of London among the common folk—I was dropped moneyless on the pavement of an American city to begin life. Often slept in the street, etc., worked as a servant, waiter, printer, proofreader, hack writer, gradually pulled myself up. I never gave up my English citizenship, but I had eighteen years of American life—and so got out of touch with Europe. For the same reason, I had to work at literature through American vehicles.

It is doubtful whether he could have survived as a writer—or survived at all—if he had started his career in another country. He was badly, almost grotesquely, equipped for earning a living. Not only was he a tiny man —5 feet 3 inches tall—and nearly blind, but he was also as shy as an African pygmy and as quick to take offense as the king's musketeers.

He starved in New York and Cincinnati, as he would later starve in New Orleans; but that was during the Gilded Age, when food was cheap and when, in the absence of organized charities, there were probably more acts of casual kindness than a waif like Lafcadio would encounter in our own day. People found jobs for him, and when he lost or left the jobs they often fed him like a stray kitten. A job printer named Henry Watkin promised to teach him the trade and meanwhile let him sleep behind the shop in a box full of paper shavings. By 1872, three years after his arrival in this country, he was working as proofreader for a small publishing house—where he gained the nickname of Old Semicolon—and at night he was writing articles for publication in the Cincinnati newspapers.

American daily journalism gave Hearn a chance that he would have found in no other field. He had come to this country at a time when many serious American writers, after fleeing to Europe, were complaining from a distance that American books had to be written and American magazines edited for an audience composed solely of women. The newspapers, however, appealed chiefly to men and retained more freedom of speech, besides a respect for elegant learning. They allowed Hearn to discuss topics like prostitution, miscegenation and crimes of violence, which couldn't have been mentioned in the magazines. They also let him print translations from the French and original stories which the magazines would have rejected as being godless or indecent. On the Cincinnati *Enquirer* and later on the New Orleans *Times-Democrat* he became a sort of provincial Remy de Gourmont, not only writing essays full of curious information but presenting his readers with extracts from the best books being written in Europe.

**For all his shyness** and inability to talk with strangers, Hearn was always getting himself talked about. In Cincinnati he married a colored woman named Alethea Foley and thereby became a social outcast. He couldn't have taught or worked for a publishing house or clerked in a shop with the scandal hanging over him, but the newspapers of the day had easier standards. Although the *Enquirer* became worried and discharged him a year after his marriage, he was soon rehired by another Cincinnati paper. He sepa-

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rated from Alethea in 1877; no divorce was necessary because mixed marriages were illegal in Ohio.

That same year he went to New Orleans, where, after living for some months at the edge of starvation and nearly dying of breakbone fever, he was given a job on the *Item* and four years later a better job on the *Times-Democrat*. In New Orleans, too, there were scandals about him, probably without much basis, but kept alive by the rebellious and sensual tone of his writing. Once again his newspapers protected him and were proud to publish his work. It was not until he went north, in 1887, and tried to live by writing for the magazines that he was exposed to the full force of gossip and began to feel like an outlaw. He sought refuge in Martinique, where he lived for nearly two years, and then fled across the world to Japan.

**Hearn reached Tokyo** in the year 1890. The kingdom, not yet an empire, was in a state of violent transformation, military, industrial and cultural. Schoolboys by the hundreds of thousands were studying English and there was a lack of qualified instructors. Hearn had come to Japan with a vague commission from Harper and Brothers, but he always quarreled with publishers and soon he was left to live by his own resources. This time, instead of starving, he became professor of English at the middle school in Matsue. His monthly salary of 100 yen, or about $45, made him one of the richer men in the little city on the Sea of Japan.

All his life till then he had felt himself to be marked off from the rest of mankind by his small stature, his strange appearance and especially by his uneven eyes, one blind, marbled and sunken in his skull, the other myopic and protruding, so that it looked like the single eye of an octopus. He had felt even more isolated by the scandals that had followed him since his marriage. In one of his letters he observed that, small as he was, he had powerful enemies.

"I am pretty much in the position," he explained, "of a bookkeeper known to have once embezzled, or of a man who has been in prison, or of a prostitute who has been on the street. These are, none of them, you will confess, *important* persons. But what keeps them in their holes? Society, Church and public opinion — the Press." In Japan he seemed to have escaped from his real or imagined enemies. Even his small stature ceased to worry him there, since he was taller than most of his Japanese colleagues; indeed, the whole country was designed on his scale. As for his strange appearance, it now provoked fewer comments, since the Japanese thought that all foreigners looked strange.

**His two years** in Matsue were a long idyll. The teachers and officials had been requested by the government to be kind to him and followed instructions; but there is evidence to show that they came to feel a personal respect and liking for Herun—or Hellum or Fellun, as they called him in their various dialects. When the first winter proved unusually severe for southwestern Japan, a friend on the faculty suggested to Herun-san that marriage was the best means of keeping warm. He also produced a candidate bride: Setsu Koizumi, the only daughter of an impoverished family belonging to the warrior or samurai caste. Setsu wasn't beautiful by Japanese or any other standards; she had a limited intelligence and a temper that she couldn't always control, but Hearn kept saying to the end that she was the best wife in the world.

Very soon he was supporting the whole Koizumi family, including Setsu's mother, her father and her grandfather by adoption, as well as a collection of relatives who came for month-long or yearlong visits. Hearn had rescued them all from poverty, but his relations with the Koizumis were not one-sided; although he had more to give, they gave whatever they could. They guarded his working hours, read Japanese books for him, learned to cook European meals, kept him from being cheated and, in 1896, adopted him as a son so that he could become a Japanese citizen.

By that time Hearn himself was a father. On the night that his first son was to be born, he knelt at his wife's bedside and prayed to the child. "Come into the world with good eyes," he kept saying over and over in broken Japanese before he retired to his study. It was one o'clock in the morning when the great-grandfather, an old samurai, came dancing into the room with his hands clasped above his head and his kimono sleeves fallen to his shoulders. "Hellum, Hellum," he shouted. "Great treasure child is born." Later he used to carry little Kazuo around the house while he sang at the top of his voice:

> Urashima Taro lived a hundred and six years,
> Takeuchi Sukune live three hundred years,
> Tobusaku lived nine thousand years,
> Koizumi Kazuo—a million and more millions.

Their common love for the first-born was another bond that held the family together. The outcast had become the center of a small community:

> There are nearly twelve here [he said in a letter]to whom I am Life and Food and other things. However intolerable anything else is, at home I enter into my little smiling world of old ways and thoughts and courtesies; where all is soft and gentle as something seen in sleep. It is so soft, so intangibly gentle and lovable and artless, that sometimes it seems a dream only; and then a fear comes that it might vanish away. It has become Me. When I am pleased, it laughs; when I don't feel jolly, everything is silent. Thus, light and vapoury as its force seems, it is a moral force, perpetually appealing to conscience.

It was a moral force that would keep him in Japan until he died. After the Matsue idyll he lost his illusions about the country as a whole. Life was sterner in Kumamoto and Kobe and Tokyo, the cities where he spent the next twelve years, so that sometimes he hated the Japanese government and even the Japanese people. He often dreamed of escaping to Manila or some other city in the tropics. His last plan was to take Kazuo with him to the United States, where he would lecture at a university in order to pay the cost of the boy's schooling.

"Money, money, money," he often

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murmured in Japanese. "I don't want money for myself, I only want it for my wife and children." In his last years he wrote to nourish his family rather than to assert his personality or revenge himself on the world, as in his earlier days. He wrote as much as he could—at least a book a year in addition to his teaching—but he was also trying painfully to do his best work and the double effort killed him. After the funeral, which was conducted by a Japanese archbishop, the Koizumi family shrine was moved into Papa-san's study; and twice a day the children and later the grandchildren recited Shinto prayers before his photograph.

**As a writer** Hearn was limited in scope and depth. Rereading his work after many years one feels that his smallness and short-sightedness were moral as well as physical qualities. His field of interest was also small and sometimes, when he ventured among ideas, he couldn't see beyond the end of his nose. He complained in a letter that he knew nothing about the smallest practical matters: "Nothing, for example, about a boat, a horse, a farm, an orchard, a watch, a garden. Nothing about what a man ought to do under any possible circumstances." In short, he knew very little about the life of human beings, and that was not his only weakness as an author. He was never able to invent a plot and had to beg his Japanese friends to tell him stories so that he would have something to write about. He had little power of construction beyond the limits of a short essay or a fairy tale. Of the sixteen books he published during his lifetime only one—*Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation*—is a book properly speaking. The others are either loose novelettes, like *Chita* and *Youma,* or collections of shorter pieces designed for magazines.

Hearn was a minor artist and his work will never occupy a very large place in the history of American literature. Yet the place may be larger than critics are now willing to grant and it is likely to be permanent. What he could do on his limited scale, he did supremely well. He had an unusual feeling for the quality of words. "For me words have color, form, character;—" he said, "they have faces, ports, manners, gesticulations;—they have moods, humors, eccentricities;—they have tints, tones, personalities." He was willing to work with words patiently—once spending two months on a single page—until they expressed exactly what he meant. Besides this sense of language and patient integrity, he had something else in his later years that authors more broadly talented have often lacked: he had a subject.

His subject of course was Japan and the question is still being argued whether he presented a true picture of it to his Western readers. This question we can let the experts decide, but not before we have noted that each of them seems to have his own notion of the truth. To another question, whether Hearn knew Japan, there can be only one answer.

He knew Japan, not as an observer, but as a citizen, the adopted son of Japanese parents, the husband of a Japanese wife, the father of Japanese children. He knew what arguments would touch the Japanese mind and what explanations were necessary to make English poems intelligible to Japanese students. He knew very little about Japanese economics or administration, but he did know Japanese legends and that knowledge may prove to be his best claim on the future. Hearn had a gift, almost a genius, for retelling legends, and when all his Japanese ghost and fairy stories are collected into a single volume we may find that he is the only writer in the English language who can be compared with Hans Christian Andersen and the brothers Grimm.

## On the Validity of Induction

**by Sir Edmund T. Whittaker**

LORD RUSSELL, who is now seventy-six, published a substantial history of philosophy only two years ago. After such a short interval, it is a remarkable feat to produce a work so exhaustive, and in many respects so original, as the volume before us.

Its standpoint differs somewhat from that to which we are accustomed in works on the theory of knowledge. The kind of knowledge Russell has in mind is scientific knowledge; he assumes that science is, broadly speaking, true, and he asks: By what processes do we come to know science?

HUMAN KNOWLEDGE: Its Scope and Limits, by Bertrand Russell (Simon and Schuster; $5).

As regards particular facts that are known without inference, he accepts the usual empiricist doctrine that they are known by perception or memory, that is to say, through experience. This being assumed, we have to consider the nature of inferences from facts to other facts, the construction of generalizations which can be asserted to be true in untested cases. What kind of validity do these inferences possess, and what principles are required in order to justify them?

It is customary to suppose that what is needed in order to make the truth of scientific laws probable is *induction.* Russell, on the other hand, denies that induction, pure and simple, is fundamental: he believes that if ordinarily accepted scientific inferences are to be accepted as valid, there is need of other principles in addition to induction, if not in place of it. It may be said, then, that the central problem of the book is the place of induction in the formation of scientific knowledge.

It is easy to construct examples in which induction seems to be justified. For instance, suppose that in a bag of dice there is one that has every face marked 3, while all the rest are correctly marked. Let a die taken at random from the bag be thrown, and suppose that each time it shows 3. After the 3 has turned up, say, ten times running, all the philosophers in the world could not shake the ordinary man's conviction that the die being thrown is the false one.

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On the other hand, let us recall a famous incident in the life of Laplace. He noticed that all the circulatory motions of the solar system known in his generation were in the direct sense—*i.e.*, counter-clockwise. There were altogether 43 movements, all in the same sense. It would seem reasonable to assume that if the movements were due to chance, the probability of the sense being direct would be the same as the probability of its being retrograde: and the chances against 43 direct with no retrograde movements would be four thousand million to one. Laplace was led by induction to believe that any hitherto undiscovered circulations in the solar system must be direct: and he attempted to account for this law by constructing his Nebular Hypothesis. However, since his day more planets and satellites have been discovered, and it is now known that in no fewer than ten instances, their rotations are retrograde: the induction was therefore unsound.

**In discussing** methods of discriminating between valid and invalid inductions, Russell follows Keynes; but he considers that pure induction must be justified or supplemented by other *a priori* principles; and he gives (p. 487) five postulates which in his opinion are required in order to validate scientific method. Each of these postulates asserts that something happens often, but not necessarily always; they all involve the concept of "cause"; and they cannot be logically deduced from the facts of experience.

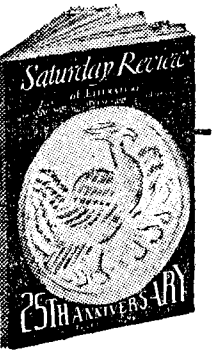
The general result of the investigation is that we know something independently of experience, and therefore empiricism does not provide an adequate theory of knowledge, though it is more nearly successful than any previous attempt. Indeed, as Russell observes, its imperfections have been discovered by adherence to a doctrine which has always been congenial to empiricist philosophy: that knowledge is partial, uncertain and inexact.

While recognizing and admiring the sustained brilliance of the argument, I cannot feel that Russell has entirely succeeded in answering the questions he set out to answer, namely how we arrive at, and why we believe, the laws which constitute modern science: and to some of his postulates I am inclined to demur. As a test, let us consider the history of one particular law, namely the Newtonian law of gravitation, and let us see whether it can be fitted into Russell's system.

Russell's first postulate arises from his rejection of the notion of "substance": a piece of matter is not to be regarded as a single persistent substantial entity, but as a string of events having a certain kind of causal connection with one another. He is compelled to introduce this "postulate of quasi-permanence" in order that it may take the place of the common-sense notions of "thing" and "person" without involving the concept "substance." One can, however, recognize the moon as an identifiable object without taking up the philosophical dispute as to whether it should be interpreted in terms of substance-metaphysics or process-metaphysics; and, indeed, none of the men of science who helped to establish the Newtonian law did in fact concern themselves with this dispute. I am therefore inclined to regard Russell's first postulate, in the form he gives it, as more of a hindrance than a help in understanding the actual genesis of scientific law.

**Newton's Law** states that any two particles of matter are attracted to each other by a force proportional to the inverse square of their distance apart. Now the two greatest natural philosophers living in Europe when the law was announced, namely Huygens and Leibnitz, both refused to accept it: and why? Chiefly because they believed what Russell now puts forward as his third postulate, namely that action at a distance is impossible. This philosophical principle was not in any way necessary or helpful in discovering the Newtonian law, but, on the contrary, obstructed it. The moral perhaps is that philosophical principles should come after science, not before it.

The law of gravitation was not, as a matter of fact, satisfactorily estab-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lished even sixty years after its first promulgation. In the eighteenth century, the objections were no longer of a philosophical character, but arose because the observed motions of the heavenly bodies could apparently not be harmonized with predictions based on Newton's Law. In particular, there were three notorious discordances, concerning respectively the motion of the moon's apogee, the acceleration of the mean motions of Jupiter and Saturn, and the acceleration of the mean motion of the moon. The first of these was successfully explained as a result of Newtonian gravitation by Clairaut in the middle of the eighteenth century, the second by Laplace in 1784, and the third, also by Laplace, in 1787, exactly a hundred years after the publication of the *Principia.* Laplace thus completed the triumph of the Newtonian theory, which from that time forward was universally accepted as true.

The acceleration of the moon's mean motion was a straightforward statement of observational experience, scarcely involving induction or Russell's postulates; what convinced everybody that the law of gravitation is true was the fact that it could account for a vast aggregate of distinct phenomena of which this was one. The notion of the frugality of hypothesis has always played a great part in scientific progress: another instance is Maxwell's discovery that the same ether that propagated electromagnetic actions could also propagate light. In Russell's system this feature is, I think, hardly given the prominence to which it is entitled.

Considering that Russell has written a *History of Western Philosophy,* it is surprising that he sometimes makes mistakes in this department of knowledge. The man who discovered the diurnal rotation of the earth on her axis was not Heracleides of Pontus, the disciple of Plato (p. 9), but Hiketas of Syracuse, the Pythagorean (so Theophrastus, quoted by Cicero); and Russell's account on page 292 hardly grasps the principle of individuation in Thomist philosophy, which depends actually on the Thomist notion of *materia prima.*

On page 278 there is a curious slip in a very different field. "Assuming for the sake of simplicity," he says, "that matter consists of electrons and protons, we could, in theory, give a proper name to each electron and each proton: we could thus define an individual human being by mentioning the electrons and protons composing his body at various times." This sounds reasonable enough at first reading, but in fact it contradicts one of the most remarkable doctrines of quantum theory, namely the impossibility of the continuous identification of individual electrons.

The reader will be refreshed every now and then by acid comments of the characteristic Russellian type. Here are a few samples:

> The supply of uranium in the planet is very limited, and it is feared that it may be used up before the human race is exterminated.
>
> It is hoped that, by studying the psychology of belief, those who control propaganda will in time be able to make anybody believe anything.
>
> Probably in time physiologists will be able to make nerves connecting the bodies of different people: this will have the advantage that we shall be able to feel another man's tooth aching.

**On the whole,** I think that this is a better book than the *History of Western Philosophy*; the author has chosen a subject better adapted to display his peculiar excellencies, and less liable to reveal his characteristic defects. The former work suffered because in the first place Russell has not the scholar's temperament—the immense knowledge of facts and backgrounds, the judicious balancing of evidence, the minute accuracy—nor has he the great historian's gift of entering completely into the hearts and minds of the men he is describing. What he has—and it is splendidly in evidence in the volume before us—is an intense desire to solve one of the most difficult problems that confront human thought, by bringing to bear on it the powers of a marvelously acute and original mind.

*Sir Edmund T. Whittaker has been professor of Mathematics at Edinburgh University since 1912 and has written many books on mathematical and optical theories.*

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# Artists and Critics: A Survey

**by Lincoln Kirstein**

ART BOOKS are for three buyers: scholars, interested amateurs and people who want something pretty. Since the war, there has been an influx of medium-priced imports. There is an attempt, long overdue, to issue inexpensive color series. Cheap labor in Holland, Switzerland, England and Italy has resulted in some excellent buys, but the color calls for qualification.

"Reproductions" never reproduce. Most plates are much reduced interpretations or approximations of the originals. Books with color are easier to sell, but few people familiar with originals can be remotely satisfied, although color *recalls* the original in memory, and some plates are better than others. Most half-tone reproductions tell more of the original than flashy or faded four-color plates.

In general, foreign low-priced books are better written, edited and produced than American. The English have a great talent for lively, scholarly, well-printed and cheap studies. Their younger writers make most of ours seem amateur, provincial and cautious.

An omnibus review hits only the high spots. Books are listed here more or less according to their permanent importance, the more expensive first. While few readers will be able to buy these, attention called to them may provoke a visit to a library. A fine new monograph, upon which years of study, taste and selection have been spent, is at least worth as much of a look as most one-man shows.

## IMPORTANT MONOGRAPHS

THE CORPUS OF ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN SEALS IN NORTH AMERICAN COLLECTIONS. Catalogued and edited by Edith Porada, in collaboration with Briggs Buchanan; 1,157 illustrations on 176 plates (Pantheon Books; 2 vols., $15).

This splendid study, brilliantly printed, edited and arranged, is but the first of a series, here covering only those cut seals in the Morgan Library. If one cannot have it, one can at least buy (at the Morgan Library for one dollar) its author's fine catalogue of the exhibition, "Mesopotamian Art in Cylinder Seals" (1947). It is an excellent resumé of the two large volumes, which array these carvings no longer as "minor" art, or curiosities, but as a coherent display of great sculpture and ancient history. Superbly reproduced in collotype from sharp impressions of the seals, these tiny objects appear as plastic monuments. No one interested in the power of cut stone should fail to memorize them.

EGYPTIAN SERVANT STATUES, by Henry H. Breasted Jr.; 99 plates (Pantheon Books; $7.50).

A majestic presentation of Egyptian manual labor in plastic terms, valuable for social history as for pure sculpture. The younger Breasted assumes his hereditary responsibility as humanist and archeologist in this spectacular debut. His awesome apparatus of scholarship always illumines the main design: to arrange a detailed past as lively as our present. The Bollingen Series, a foundation freed from the usual economic strictures, gives us another permanent addition to the many lenses which make it possible for the lazy and ignorant to know a new, rewarding world.

JEAN FOUQUET AND HIS TIMES, by Paul Wescher. Translated by Eveline Winkwoth; 95 plates, 6 in color (Harcourt, Brace; $10).

The text is a useful introduction to the initiator of French psychological portraiture, a genre as perceptive and influential as the prose of Balzac or Proust. As production, this book demonstrates differences between European and American trade standards. Color plates in the original (*Jean Fouquet und Seine Zeit*) are clear, subtle and carefully printed. When the Swiss reached the American run, they permitted the impressions to become brash, vulgarized, all but useless. Plate for plate, the American version is brass for gold, red for crimson. This does not diminish the great value of text and half-tones.

## ESTHETICS

ART AS THE EVOLUTION OF VISUAL KNOWLEDGE, by Charles Biederman (published by the author in Red Wing, Minn.; $15).

This six-pound tome, which took ten years to write, contains few useful plates not found in some other source work. Its basis is a naïve application of

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—THE SPECTATOR, London

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—*Time*

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general semantics to aspects of the visual arts. Without professional standards or original judgment, Biederman supports an odd salad of facts by quotations from indiscriminate texts. This accumulation is well-printed, with excellent half-tones—a sad waste.

ART AND FAITH, by Jean Cocteau and Jacques Maritain (Philosophical Library; $2.75).

In a maddeningly arch English translation of a snobbish period piece (c. 1917-25), Cocteau appears as immodest and un-Christian. Seldom lacking the sin of Pride, he manipulates his perennial steely wit like a professional sportsman; compared to Valéry's *M. Teste*, however, it seems amateurish. Maritain's half is more interesting. Its grave apologetics and moral responsibility dash in vain against Cocteau's narcissistic jokes. The book is stimulating, because, for Cocteau, art has always been religion and Maritain exposes this common heresy.

KLEE ON MODERN ART, by Paul Klee. With an introduction by Herbert Read (Faber & Faber, distributed in America by George Ephron, 41 West 83rd St., New York City; $2.50).

A humble, beautifully analyzed statement of method of the great Swiss, delivered as a lecture at the Bauhaus (1924). Although primarily a book for students, its technical definitions are so clear that everyone should read it. Sobriety, patience and sweetness are in every line. Alternate pages well reproduce a gallery of Klee pen drawings. The dignified playfulness in their design, the psychological sophistication of their spirit, contribute much to this pedagogical masterpiece. Only poets like Baudelaire can write so well of painting; only painters like Klee about technique and morale.

## TECHNICAL

ZORACH EXPLAINS SCULPTURE, by William Zorach (American Artists Group; $7.50).

Zorach's sculpture is generalized and awkward, following a mild personal formula; so is his writing. Historical sections are careless and incomplete, loaded with reproductions of the author's figures. The book is not cheap, and for the same price Jack Rich's massive study, *Materials and Methods of Sculpture* (Oxford University Press) is a far better buy.

THE SECRET FORMULAS AND TECHNIQUES OF THE MASTERS, by Jacques Maroger. Translated by Eleanor Beckham; 40 pages of reproductions (Studio Publications; $4.50).

The only thing tending to invalidate the secrets revealed in this otherwise informative book are the pictures painted by its author in media he recommends as those used by past masters. All his own surfaces are slick, fatty and licked. Maroger has affected a number of living artists who use his patented paints, but neither he nor they can evoke much enthusiasm for his "discoveries" of lost "secrets."

THE ART MUSEUM IN AMERICA, by Walter Pach; 64 illustrations (Pantheon Books; $6).

This study was undertaken with a grant in aid from the Rockefeller Foundation. It is excessively good-tempered; treating all aspects of our museum world with a generous glow, as if the author was spokesman for every responsible director. Pach is perceptive, but it appears that, after a long life dedicated to the service of art, he feels kindness is best. A gentle corrective to some aspects of his optimism is *Fakes*, by Otto Kurz (Yale University Press; $6). There, several important American museum acquisitions, also reproduced by Pach, are given more analytical treatment.

GENUINE AND FALSE: IMITATIONS, COPIES, FORGERIES, by Hans Tietze; 73 plates, 8 in color (Chanticleer Press; $3).

A valuable, inexpensive introduction to art detection. Reproductions in color and gravure are finely printed in Holland. The problem of the Van Meegeren Vermeers is exposed in technical, esthetic and moral complexity. There is little controversial material, such as Otto Kurz offers in his *Fakes*, but Tietze makes us look more closely at everything. This book, and the one below, are the first in a series, "Approach to Art." All titles in preparation promise a high standard of taste, scholarship and ingenuity.

ARTIST AND CRAFTSMAN, by H. Ruhemann; 68 reproductions, 8 in color (Chanticleer Press; $3).

An intelligent, admirably presented study of contrasts, similarities and influences affecting painters, sculptors, engravers, ceramicists and weavers. The Dutch reproductions are excellent. The format, directly juxtaposing details from several objects on a single open leaf, vividly demonstrates short-circuits of style and personality.

## GENERAL HISTORIES

ART THROUGH THE AGES, by Helen Gardner; 700 illustrations (Harcourt, Brace; $6).

Revised and completed after Miss Gardner's death, this general survey is comprehensive and well organized. It is a high-school textbook that manages to cover the vast ground; pictures are apposite, supporting an unprejudiced, informed taste. The weakest section is on art since 1900; but in fewer than 1,000 pages the work of 5,000 years is put in order—major as well as minor forms; architecture and sculpture as well as painting and ceramics.

THE POCKET BOOK OF OLD MASTERS, edited by Herman J. Wechsler; 65 gravure illustrations, plus 4 in color (Pocket Books, Inc.; 25 cents).

The publishers offer a remarkable survey for a quarter; the gravure is good; the color plates poor. The choice of accompanying texts is lively and unexpected, notable for the reprint of Virgil Barker's essay on Breughel. But Gobineau's dream of Michaelangelo and

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Maugham's of Greco are models of spiritual falsification. The book is unpretentious—a sensible piece of vulgarization.

## INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS

MAX WEBER, by Lloyd Goodrich; 36 reproductions, plus one in color (published for the Whitney Museum of American Art by Macmillan; $2).

This uncritical monograph, accepting an artist on his own terms, is useful as the only book on its subject. It appraises Weber's later works as "richly exuberant plastic fantasies combining inexhaustible inventiveness with subtlety and refinement." Inexhaustible? Inventive? No analysis supports the judgments; actually the late Weber is a mosaic of innumerable recent impressions from local and foreign artists, with tiny invention if some refinement.

REX WHISTLER, by Laurence Whistler (Pellegrini & Cudahy; $3).

A charmingly produced (English) study, by the artist's brother, of a modest pasticheur in decorative art. Whistler was a fine craftsman in the eighteenth-century taste, and many of his designs have a genteel, but unsentimental, domesticated richness. He must have been a delightful man; one of the best drawings shows "Correct Layout for Kit for Barracks Room Inspection" for his company in the Welsh Guards. Excellent bibliography: lists of books illustrated, ballets designed, murals painted, etc.

THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH, by Oliver Millar; 40 illustrations, 8 in color, plus one on dust wrapper (Harper; $2.50).

A very well-written and illustrated (English) book on a man who was far more than a fashionable face-painter. It forces us to go to the Frick Museum to see several newly and well-cleaned portraits, and the wonderful "St. James Park." They are strong personal visions, with the acid fragility of color, evanescent brushwork and psychological clarity since lost in English painting.

ROGIER VAN DER WEYDEN: PIETA. With an introduction by W. Vogelsang; 7 color plates, plus one on dust wrapper (Harper; $2.50).

Although impressively large, and inexpensive, this Dutch-produced book is disappointing. The project is a hard-boiled religio-commercial job, inferior to similar works made in Ghent or Spain. The best reproduction is on the dust jacket, unrepeated inside. The frontispiece, from which the other big details derive, has the false bloom of wax fruit. All forms are blurred. The introduction is heavily, minutely descriptive, without as much clarity as the plates themselves.

ALBRECHT DURER: DRAWINGS AND WATER COLORS. Selected, and with an Introduction, by Edmund Schilling; 57 illustrations, one in color (Harper; $2.50).

A well-produced Swiss-printed book, nicely edited. Those drawings originally in color suffer most, particularly the *grass*, and the landscapes. The famous *rabbit*, a frontispiece in color, is badly blurred. But the notes are fine, and the book as a whole is appetizing to the eye and agreeable in the hand.

GEORGE DU MAURIER (Pellegrini & Cudahy; $2.50).

One of a series of British-produced "English Masters of Black-and-White." Other titles at the same price serve Cruikshank, Doyle, Tenniel, Bewick, etc. An American counterpart is announced. The Du Maurier is pleasantly done, with pencil sketches illustrating the base of the final ink drawings. Americans will be sorry there are so few from *Trilby*.

## THE PITMAN GALLERY

These books, originally appearing in England through Faber & Faber, are perhaps the best of recent, inexpensive color monographs (Pitman Publishing Corp.; $1.95 each). The texts are models of compact information and sensibility, well-edited and beautifully written, by scholars and humanists. While the plates are scarcely comparable in quality, they urge us at once to a closer look at the originals in museums, already an important service. Particularly fine are J. V. S. Wilkinson's *Mughal Painting* (although much of the miniature crispness has faded in printing); Sir Kenneth Clark's *Florentine*, and Tancred Borenius' *Sienese* books. Lawrence Haward's *Music in Painting* is delightful and serious. Wilenski's *English Outdoor Painting*, and the jobs on Manet, Degas and *Dutch Indoor Subjects* are a bit more perfunctory. Stephen Spender brings a "poetic" eye to Botticelli, but it sees little not seen before. Nevertheless, the enthusiasm, professionalism and enterprise of the series, extension of which will follow, set standards which no similar American effort so far has met.

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# THEATRE: Defense of a Failure

IN THE New York theatre only the strong are treated with respect. To find fault with a hit suggests disdain for the box office—than which nothing is more suspect; to roast a flop is routine. There is always good cause for a flop, but I am often impelled to seek the good in what has been scorned. Some of our best people are failures.

I feel certain that Dalton Trumbo's first play, "The Biggest Thief in Town" (it closed on April 9 after 13 performances), possessed greater merit than most of us supposed. It deserved to fail since it proved a poor show, but a writer of ability, which Trumbo is, should be rejected with something better than the thumbs-down of our daily press.

"The Biggest Thief in Town" was essentially a comic folk tale with allegorical overtones. It concerned the death of a powerful, corrupt business magnate. When the town undertaker, a decent fellow who has been struggling all his days to earn an honest living for his daughter and himself, takes advantage of the chaos at the mansion on the hill to make himself an extra large profit, he suffers acute pangs of conscience. The rich man is a fraud; he contributes nothing to the community. He has gained his eminence by ruthless exploitation of his victims' gullibility. The townsfolk, who have always lived from hand to mouth, feel guilty over a prank.

Trumbo's writing has in it something of the educated hayseed or village intellectual. It is wry and tartly humorous. It has little pretentiousness; it is homely, skeptical, shrewd and dryly affectionate. It mingles common sense with good will, a rather original quality among American playwrights.

To be shocked, as were the reviewers, by the highjinks and drinking in the presence of the old reprobate's supposed corpse strikes me as an example of big-city provincialism. A kind of rural Rabelaisianism in the presence of death is not only common among people close to the soil but actually bespeaks greater health than protestations about "bad taste" at anything but a sanctimonious attitude toward a cadaver.

If "The Biggest Thief in Town" was a failure, it was due in part to an overextension of its material without sufficient dramatic incident or complication, but perhaps even more to a totally inappropriate production. Such a play requires a cracker-barrel casualness of approach, a folksy observation that is far from Broadway comedy sophistication. The characters of this play are not extroverted wise guys, but crusty country codgers given to much brooding and occasional, surprising bursts of sharp articulateness. Thomas Mitchell as the undertaker and Russ Brown as the newspaper editor were well cast, but the correct tone for the play was almost never caught.

**More successful** but less honorable is Herman Wouk's melodrama, "The Traitor." This is an effort to cash in on a topicality that is related to the audience's mental confusion—compounded of prejudice, indecision and *Reader's Digest* information or ignorance. The play touches on Communism, academic loyalty tests, atomic spies and the Soviet menace with an irritating cleverness which serves to make it an evasive, catch-all thriller.

The young Naval Intelligence officer of the play states that though he entirely disagrees with the Communists, they should be permitted to have their say even as college professors (a few people in the audience applaud). The liberal professor of philosophy decides at the end of the play that the immature should not be exposed to Communist influence (a larger number of people applaud). The traitor is not a Communist; he is an idealistic fanatic intent on bringing about world peace. The Soviet spy is not a Russian or a Marxist but an Alsatian scoundrel who is acting on

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behalf of a vague Soviet "client." Naturally there is a clear anti-Communist emphasis, but no one is attacked and no position is taken because the author cannot yet assume a unified audience reaction.

Anyway the show is only meant to entertain after a fashion. It does not fail in this—the middle portion is effective suspense stuff, since words like "Geiger counter," "thorium" and "atomic war" nowadays are fraught with reverberations like evil omens to the superstitious. Yet even as melodrama the play leaves us frustrated. Its "tact" or cagey refusal to offend any segment of the audience defeats it. We are only half involved in the play; we root for no one because humanly as well as ideologically no issue is sufficiently defined.

Lee Tracy and Walter Hampden are both good in what are basically sketchy parts. HAROLD CLURMAN

## MOVIES: Improvement on Wilde

IN ADDITION to cutting one of the most allusive titles in English letters to a single flavorless word, the producers of "The Fan" have set Wilde's play within a contemporary frame and turned the brittle sentiment of his drawing-room comedy into a mawkish romance. It is a quite complete transformation, and the cold fragments of Wilde's wit stick out like the bones of an imperfectly buried skeleton.

We are to imagine that Mrs. Erlynne (Madeleine Carroll) has returned to London after the recent war and looked up Lord Darlington (George Sanders) to demand his assistance in identifying and claiming an old fan found in some blitz debris and now being held for auction. To gain his friendship, she must explain what really happened on that incredibly distant evening of Lady Windermere's birthday ball. But why it must be done in this clumsy way, heaven only knows, since Wilde made it admirably clear within the scope of his own text.

Martita Hunt, as that dowager dragon, the Duchess of Berwick, understands the spirit of Wilde's perverse sermonizing and brocaded dramatics. The rest of the company, including Jeanne Crain, Richard Greene and Hugh Dempster, have been left in a state of unseemly innocence.

**The screen art** of Bing Crosby consisted in presenting toward the world a boyish friendliness and a gay disregard for adversity. He was nimble enough to dodge most of the blows, and when he was hit he grinned. It was an uncomplicated sort of talent, but now that it appears to be gone you know it was very real. The Crosby of "A Connecticut Yankee" is lumpish, humorless, almost bad-tempered. Perhaps he was bad-tempered; he had the provocation of a stultifying script. Twain's slapstick romance was once the source of a great musical show, but there is no evidence of it in this version. It is a slogging job of spiritless make-believe, with William Bendix, Sir Cedric Hardwicke and Rhonda Fleming also engaged in the battle with boredom.

**There has been** a good deal of keening over the big companies' decision to withdraw financial support from the annual Motion Picture Academy awards. Culture, it is said, has been dealt another body blow by the entrenched vulgarians. But I have read nowhere that the moguls will withdraw any picture or retire any actor honored with an Oscar, nor even that they will fail to support the Academy in its general professional activities. So I do not understand the force of this outrage. Does it cost so much to cast a vote; must the trophy assay at 14 karats? Can't the Academy go right ahead as though the industry never had paid the lavish bills? If not, why not? ROBERT HATCH


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It puts our armed bases right on Russia's borders. The Russians have been invaded five times in the past 25 years. Do you think this looks "peaceful" to them? As the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America recently said about the Pact: "No defensive alliance should be entered into which might validly appear as aggressive to Russia as a Russian alliance with Latin America would appear to us."

### 3. Whose "Aggression"?

They say we must run this terrible risk of war because of the threat of Russian aggression. But is there such a threat? As John Foster Dulles recently said: "I do not know any responsible high official in any government, who believes that the Soviet state now plans conquest by open military aggression."

### 4. It Commits Us to War

Let's not deceive ourselves. No honeyed words from the State Department can hide the fact that under the terms of the Pact we are automatically committed to go to war if one breaks out in Europe. We, the people, don't have any say. Neither does our Congress.

### 5. China Points the Way

We poured billions into China to arm Chiang Kai-shek—and wasted the billions. Today the Communists control most of China and most Chinese people hate us. But we were lucky. If there had been a treaty like the Atlantic Pact covering the Far East, our boys would now be fighting in Asia.

### 6. Lowers Our Standard of Living

To rearm Europe under the Pact will cost Uncle Sam—us—about $20 billions. We already spend $21 billions—more than half our budget—for war purposes. These additional billions will mean practically no new houses, or schools or hospitals. It means less security for America, not more.

### ACTION FOR PEACE!

1. Write or wire Senator Tom Connally and your Senators to demand full and extended hearings by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the North Atlantic Military Pact.
2. Write or wire your Senators immediately to vote against the N. A. M. P.
3. Protest to President Truman against violating the spirit and intent of the UN by this Military Pact. Urge him to enter negotiations with the Soviet Union for settlement of outstanding differences.

## The Constructive Alternative

What, then, is the solution?

I do not hold Russia blameless, as I do not hold the United States blameless. But the historians of the future—if any survive—will hold guilty that nation which was reluctant to sit down at a conference table when there was still time.

The Administration says it wants peace. Then let it state its terms. Let the Russians do likewise, as they have repeatedly said they are prepared to do. Let the heads of both nations, after preparations at the expert level, sit down to negotiate those terms. Peace will require compromises on both sides. But no government that wants peace and knows its minimum demands can refuse even to discuss them—and propose a war-breeding alliance instead. That is not the way of Franklin Roosevelt. That is not the way of the United Nations.

*Henry A. Wallace*

### HELP SPREAD THIS MESSAGE

PROGRESSIVE PARTY NR-1
56 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y.

I agree with what Henry Wallace says on the North Atlantic Military Pact and I want to help bring his important message to the American people.

Therefore I enclose a contribution of $_____ to go toward publishing this message for mass distribution.

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